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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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CUC, CHCC MOU underway to settle over $68.75M balance

Terlaje

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. says it is in the process of establishing a new memorandum of agreement between CUC and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. to tackle the institutions over $68-million arrears.

See CUC on Page 4

SOLEMN MASS OF THANKSGIVING RACQUEL FLOYD

A Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the canonical establishment of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa was held last night at the Mt. Carmel Church in Chalan Kanoa. Pro-Prefect for the Section of Evangelization of Dicastery for Evangelization Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, ninth from left, Archbishop Ryan Jimenez of the Archdiocese of Agana, eight from left, and outgoing Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa Father Charlie Borja, 11th from left, pose with other clergymen of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa pose for a group photo.

Seaport sees over $8M revenue in FY2024

File photo of the Port of Saipan. CPA

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reports that it has garnered over $8 million in revenue through the CNMI seaports in fiscal year 2024.

Recently, CPA has submitted its 2024 citizen centric report to the CNMI Legislature and has reported that the agency has seen an increase of 7% in airport revenue in the last fiscal year compared to the previous fiscal year.

According to the report, in fiscal year 2024, CPA's seaport revenue totaled $8,044,685. This was a 7% increase from FY 2023 where seaport revenue totaled $7,516, 775. In FY

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Diocese of Chalan Kanoa gets new bishop

Pope Francis has appointed Fr. Romeo Duetao Convocar, former apostolic administrator and currently the vicar-general of the Archdiocese of Agana, Guam, as the new bishop of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa in the CNMI.

RELATED NEWS

- A betrayal of trust and heritage: Where are our indigenous leaders? PAGE 7

This appointment, officially published Monday, was also personally announced in Chalan Kanoa by Luis Antonio Gokim Cardinal Tagle, the pro-prefect of

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Convocar

Palacios

Palacios: DPL needs to push hard for new hotel leases

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios says he is pushing the Department of Public Lands to pursue new leases for iconic hotel properties that are set to expire soon.

Recently, the House of Representatives and Senate held its first joint session where they unanimously voted in favor of passing a joint resolution approving the Coral Ocean Resort's new lease with the Department of Public Lands.

In a statement from Palacios, he said while this is good news, he

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BUSINESS
IT&E is excited to announce the expansion of its 5G coverage in the Marianas and Guam, to include the launch of 5G services in Garapan and Susupe on Saipan, and the deployment of additional 5G sites in Guam to increase coverage to 70% of the island's population.
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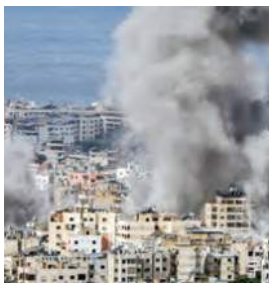

WORLD
Diplomats and other officials say there have been several sticking points in ceasefire talks to end the war between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, even as conditions for an agreement appear to be ripe.
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LIFE & STYLE
British pop star Ed Sheeran has apologized to Ruben Amorim after inadvertently interrupting the new Manchester United head coach during a live television interview.
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Local

Rotary clubs of Saipan, Tokyo Hachiogi South forge sister club relationship

RACQUEL FLOYD

Thirty-five visiting Rotarians of the Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South pose with Rotary Club of Saipan members after the signing of their certificate of partnership yesterday afternoon at the Azucena Hall of Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South members pose with their gift from the Rotary Club of Saipan.

RACQUEL FLOYD

A plaque of appreciation was awarded to Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South president Masayuki Wakimoto by the Rotary Club of Saipan.

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Rotary Club of Saipan and Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachiogi South certified its agreement to a sister club relationship yesterday afternoon at the Azucena room of Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

Thirty-five visiting Rotarians of the Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South, Rotary Club of Saipan, and Rotaract members witnessed the two Rotary clubs formalizing their partnership to connect communities through service and fellowship.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Rotary Club of Saipan president Joann Aquino, left, and Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South president Masayuki Wakimoto,center, pose with the signed certificate of partnership.

"This certificate we just exchanged represents far more than words. It symbolizes a bridge across the Pacific. The distance between Saipan and Tokyo may be measured in miles but the spirit of what we know, no boundaries are joined hands today with our friend in Tokyo Hachiogi South, we are not just creating a partnership, we're building a family," said Rotary Club of Saipan president Joann Aquino.

The message delivered by Aquino was interpreted in Japanese by of Rotary Club of Saipan member Hiroko Stewart.

Aquino added in her message that Rotary's model of service transcends borders through humanitarian projects, education initiatives, and environmental efforts. The combined strength of Rotary members allows them to achieve more than they could alone.

She also mentioned that Rotary members embrace opportunities to serve their communities and their cultures and demonstrate their commitment to service above self.

According to Aquino, the presence of the Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South filled her with joy and optimism for the future. She hopes to build a stronger relationship through friendship and shared commitment to service.

"Your presence here today filled us with joy and optimism for the future we will build together. May the sister club relationship grow stronger with each passing year in which through the friendship we forge and the lives we touch through our shared commitment to serve," added Aquino.

Meanwhile, Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South president Masayuki Wakimoto said that it was his first visit to Saipan with Rotary members in 10 years and that he is grateful for the opportunity to plan the resumption of the high school student exchange program with the Rotary Club of Saipan.

"This year and I made my class local bonding in actions. This is because I want you to cherish a bonding and take action to deepen our friendship and I am very happy I could visit Saipan with many members today for the first time in 10 years as a friendship trip and meet members from Rotary Club of Saipan today. I'm also very grateful that we will be able to resume and start planning the high school student exchange and student program with the Rotary of Club of Saipan this year," said Wakimoto.

Former Rotary Club of Saipan president David "Uncle Dave" M. Sablan then spoke in Japanese and serenaded visiting members of the Rotary Club of Tokyo Hachioji South with a Japanese song.

The meeting was concluded with the awarding of a plaque and group photo.

MTEC, MVA visit Kagman Elementary School

The Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority visited students at Kagman Elementary School last Nov. 20 with their message that "Tourism is Everybody's Business."

Students had the opportunity to learn about the Marianas tourism industry, what types of people visit the islands, why travelers choose the Marianas, what the role of the MVA is, and how students can support tourism.

MTEC

Students at Kagman Elementary School respond during a presentation about the Marianas tourism industry on Nov. 20, 2024, by Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority at the school in Kagman.

"They informed our students on how they can help MVA in promoting our islands," said 4th grade teacher Dorothy Santos. "I think it's meaningful for them since they also experience when tourists come to our islands. Sometimes there are tourists that come to our school…they think it's a park! They learned that they need to be kind."

The annual school outreach aims to engage 4th graders, 7th graders, and 10th graders on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota with current information and activities highlighting the Marianas' primary economic driver.

MTEC

Students at Kagman Elementary School respond as Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects coordinator Sherman Santos presented about the Marianas tourism industry on Nov. 20, 2024, at the school in Kagman.

MVA Community Projects coordinator Sherman Santos assisted with the presentation for the first time.

"I was amazed at how much knowledge the 4th grade classes had with regards to tourism," said Santos. "All the students were excited and eager to learn more about what we do at the MVA. Overall, great participation from all the students."

MTEC is a non-profit organization whose mission is three-fold: to foster community understanding and support of the visitor industry; to educate the public, especially school students, about the value, social benefits, and economic contributions made to the community by the visitor industry; and to instill, improve, and promote the "Hafa Adai-Tirow" hospitality spirit throughout the island community. The organization is also preparing for its annual MTEC Tourism Summit with school MY WAVE Clubs in January 2025.

For more information, contact MVA Community Projects coordinator Jack Aranda at communityprojects@mymarianas.com or (670) 664-3200/1. ***(PR)***

Free portable solar-powered tabletop fans distribution on Saipan this Saturday

The Energy Division, in conjunction with its Energy Education, Efficiency, and Conservation Program efforts, will be distributing one portable solar-powered tabletop fan per residential household to assist residential consumers reduce the energy consumption and electricity costs of their homes and to educate the community about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation efforts in the CNMI.

The portable solar-powered tabletop fans will be available for distribution on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the specified time, while supplies last. The event will be a drive-thru distribution event and will be held this Saturday, Nov. 30, at the Koblerville Youth Center starting at 8am until supplies last.

To avail of a portable solar-powered tabletop fan, residential household consumers must present a copy of a valid government-issued identification card and a copy of a most recent utility bill with the name on the account. If consumers are renting, please provide a copy of the lease or rental agreement along with the CUC utility bill. If the CUC account is under the landlord's name, a copy of the landlord's valid government-issued identification card must be provided. If the tenant is sub-metered, the sub-metered number must be provided along with the CUC utility bill/receipt of the utility bill and a copy of the account holder's valid government-issued identification card.

If a residential homeowner with a CUC account holder's name is unable to participate in the event, a homeowner may designate an authorized person to obtain a portable solar-powered tabletop fan on their behalf. However, an authorization letter must be issued by the homeowner designating a person authorized to obtain the portable solar-powered tabletop fan, along with a copy of a valid government-issued ID of the account holder and the designated person authorized. Businesses, rental property owners, and/or Landlords are not eligible to receive the portable solar-powered tabletop fan.

Additionally, please be sure to follow posted traffic flow signs as instructed. Operators and passengers of motor vehicles must remain in their vehicles at all times. The Division of Energy respectfully requests the cooperation and understanding of the community to strictly observe the following notice:

■ Walk-ins are strictly not allowed and individuals will be turned away.

■ Division of Energy reserves the right to refuse any services to any or all persons during the event and or reserves the right to make any changes, modifications, revisions, etc., and or to cancel, any portion of the program services or event, in part or as a whole, without any prior notification.

For additional questions or information regarding this event, you may contact Mardee-Ann Hermosilla, administrative officer, or Daniel Taitano, program coordinator, at (670) 664-4480/2.

Funding opportunity for this project is made possible through federal grant funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), State Energy Program-Bi-Partisan Infrastructure law (SEP-BIL). ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-012-24-(REPACKAGED)

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 27, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 2X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING NOVEMBER 27, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 2X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT **(IFB-012-24-REPACKAGED)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR **BEFORE 2:00 P.M., DECEMBER 27, 2024. A 10% BID BOND OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS.** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

FREDERICK PANGELINAN
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-25-002

KAGMAN WATER TANK REPLACEMENT AND BOOSTER PUMP STATION UPGRADE

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the construction of the Kagman Water Tank Replacement and Booster Pump Station Upgrade in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of demolition of the existing water tank, booster pumps, yard piping, and all other appurtenances; construction of a new 70,000-gallon cast-in-place circular concrete water tank; removal of the temporary modular tank; construction of new generator building; installation of new generator equipment, flow meter stations, triplex pitless booster pump system, telemetry and controls; reconnection of existing waterlines; electrical works; site improvements; and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the project plans and specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by a grant from the US Public Law 117-2 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **four hundred twenty (420) calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **December 5, 2024 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-25-002, Kagman Water Tank Replacement and Booster Pump Station Upgrade**", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on December 27, 2024**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidder. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 12, 2024** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email at manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Ms. Alley Reyes, Engineer, Water & Wastewater – via email at alley.reyes@cucgov-.org and Ms. Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Technichian Senior – via email at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

KEVIN O. WATSON
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

2025 PSS ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF THE YEAR

Sinapalo Elementary School's Administrative State Staff of the Year, Demmy Catubay, fourth left, front row, was hailed Monday as the state-level winner for the 2025 CNMI Public School System Administrative State Staff of the Year Award in a surprise announcement by Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence F. Camacho, left, who was joined by the chief executive officer of the Council of Chief State School Officers Dr. Carissa Moffat Miller, standing center, back. The education chief and the CCSSO chief were joined by senior director for Instructional Service Jackie Quitugua and Sinapalo Elementary School principal Daisy Quitugua as part of the 36th year Education Day Celebration of the Public School System in presenting the awards. Also in the photo are the Sinapalo Elementary School level Education Day winners: Teacher of the Year: Emmylou Hocog; Instructor of the Year: Alvina King; Trades, Maintenance of the Year: Riza Jingco; and Teacher Aide of the Year: Ally Manglona Also in the photo are school staff Mary Grace Mendiola, Lorna Calvo, Leslie Barcinas, Maria Pobeda, Tricia Manglona, Elani Orilla, Kimberly Matagolai, Frince Masga, Roan Barcinas, Lea Maratita, Ricksita Atalig, Shannon Barcinas, Geraldine Dela Cruz, Charlene Cruz, Anna Lee Mendiola, Enterina Calvo, and Melevie Balaan.

PSS

CUC

From page 1

Last Monday, CUC held a regular board meeting to discuss updates on a number of things, to include updates on CHCC's outstanding balance of over $68 million.

Specifically, CHCC's arrears now total $68.75 million, including penalties, as of November 2024.

According to CUC executive director Kevin Watson, he and his team have been meeting with CHCC to discuss how they can catch up with their arrears.

"CUC chief financial officer Betty Terlaje is now preparing various options to submit to them for the [new] MOA. It is my goal to get them to enter into an agreement, not just for one year, but for a duration to bring the arrears to zero balance," he said.

According to CUC CFO Betty Terlaje, she and Watson has even brought up the possibility of waiving the penalties CHCC owes if CHCC agrees with certain terms and conditions.

"We are giving them options and offered if they were to pay a certain amount [initially] we would waive the penalties. Of course, if they default [on the MOU] then the penalties will be reinstated. These are options to give CHCC incentives to pay the arrears sooner rather than later," she said.

Of course, Terlaje said this is all subject to an agreement between both parties.

"A new MOU is something we all have to agree to. We will present options to them before we sit down to discuss an MOU. We will send them those options this week and whatever position they take, and we agree to, we will put them in an MOU so we can start collecting payments," she said.

Terlaje notes that the pending MOU won't encompass CHCC's current bills moving forward as Public Law 23-30 has tremendously decreased the amount CHCC would have to pay in utilities each month.

"Since the public law was passed, [CHCC] will start to pay based commercial rates. Currently, based on commercial rate, they are using about $290,000. Their previous average usage was around $600,000 so that's about half. They should be able to pay at least their current bill moving forward until we come to an agreement with the arrears," she said.

"We want to establish an MOU that allows them to pay their previous balance as well as their current balance. At least that way we help CHCC and CUC. We want to meet with them soon. We plan to get a letter out to them this week," she said.

In 2023, CUC signed an MOU with CHCC in which CHCC agreed to pay $525,000 a month to address over $53 million in utility arrears.

In a previous interview with Terlaje, she shared that CHCC's MOU with CUC expired last May.

Terlaje, during the interview, said in order to address arrears reflective of utility usage increase, a new memorandum of understanding with CHCC needs to be executed.

SEAPORT

From page 1

2022, CPA's seaport revenue was at $6,583, 455.

According to CPA, the seaport's FY 2024 operating revenues remained steady with a 7% overall increase as compared to FY 2023.

Meanwhile, harbor fees also remained fairly consistent with an 8% increase when compared to fiscal year 2023 while concession and lease income increased by 4%.

Harbor fees include wharfage fees, docking fees, special services, berthing fees and port entry fees.

Other revenues include permit fees, citations and security service fees.

In addition, CPA reports that overall, operating expenses for the seaports decreased by 14% as compared to FY 2023.

"This decrease is due to the implementation of austerity measures, and the implementation of cost containment measures," said CPA.

DIOCESE

From page 1

the Dicastery for Evangelization, who is currently on Saipan for the celebration of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa's 40th anniversary of canonical establishment.

Convocar was born in Iloilo, Philippines. He completed both his high school studies and his bachelor of arts major in philosophy with a minor in English at St. Joseph Seminary in Dumaguete City and his theological studies at St Joseph Regional Seminary in Jaro, Iloilo City.

He was ordained into the Sacred Order of Priesthood for the Military Ordinariate on Sept. 17, 1996. Subsequently, he was commissioned as a military chaplain in the Armed Forces of the Philippines with the rank of captain. He completed his Technical Service Officers Basic and Advance Courses at the Philippine Army Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Ramon Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija. He served as a chaplain officer for about 10 years and was assigned to various military installations and commands under the headquarters units and the Navy.

Moreover, he also served for about five years as the spiritual director and procurator of the Domus Josephi Formation House, a seminary of the Military Ordinariate.

Convocar moved to Guam and was incardinated in the Archdiocese of Agana. He has served as the parish administrator of St Joseph Church in Inalajan, pastor of San Isidro in Malojloj, and rector of Agana Cathedral-Basilica. Currently, he is the administrator of Blessed Diego Luis de San Vitores Parish in Tumon. Moreover, as he has studied tribunal practice at the Institute of Tribunal Practice, which is affiliated with the Catholic Institute of Sydney and governed by the Canon Law Society of Australia and New Zealand, he furthermore serves as an advocate and auditor in the Metropolitan Tribunal.

Convocar was also a formator of seminarians of the archdiocese before the closure of the seminaries in Guam. He served as the vicar-general to former Agana Archbishop Most Rev. Michael Jude Byrnes until his resignation on March 28, 2023, due to health reasons. At the time of Byrnes' resignation, he was named by Pope Francis as the apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Agana, the office that he served for more than a year.

Since Aug. 15, 2024, Fr. Charlie Borja has served as the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa following the appointment of Archbishop Ryan Pagente Jimenez as the Metropolitan Archbishop of Agana.

The bishop-elect's Episcopal Consecration will be announced at a later date. ***(PR)***

DPL

From page 1

continues to push DPL to pursue more leases as other iconic hotel properties will soon exhaust their leases.

"I believe PIC (Pacific Islands Club Saipan) and Kanoa (Resort) are all up for lease renewals, so DPL needs to push hard. Obviously, the Mariana Resort property has been idle for quite a while, so they need to address that issue. I'm pushing them on a weekly basis," he said.

Last week, 19 members of the House of Representatives and all nine members of the Senate voted in favor of passing Joint Session Resolution 23-2, a joint session resolution granting approval of the final draft lease agreement entered into between the Department of Public Lands and Suwaso Corp. dba Coral Ocean Resort.

The agreement is essentially another 40-year lease of the COR property with the option of a 15-year extension.

The version of the lease agreement passed includes a minor amendment in the benefit of $5,000 that Suwaso will pay annually to a scholarship program specifically for NMDs.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Suwaso was initially granted a 25-year land lease back in Feb. 10, 1986, with an option to extend it for 15 years, for a total of 40 years. After the initial lease expired in 2011, the company opted to avail of its 15-year extension. It is currently on its 38th year. The 15-year extension will expire in 2026.

Back in March, Suwaso proposed a new lease to allow COR to remain in operation for another 40 years.

Under the proposed new lease, Suwaso will pay an annual rate of 0.6% of the fair market value for the first 10 years and that will increase to 1.125% for the remaining term of the lease.

In addition, the lessee will pay a percentage of its business gross receipts and contribute over $1.8 million in public benefits. The public benefits include $600,000 for environmental improvements; $300,000 for beautification projects; $5,000 in annual student education assistance; $10,000 in annual promotion of local cultures; and $300,000 for playground equipment.

Under the environmental improvement projects, Suwaso will install streetlights and a new asphalt road for Agingan Beach, As Gonno Road, and Isley Field.

The company will also continue maintaining the Agingan Beach pavilions and restroom.

Suwaso also promises to provide financial assistance for eligible Northern Marianas Descent students.

The company also pledges to give $5,000 each year to the Indigenous Affairs Office and Carolinian Affairs Office to support activities to promote the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures, language, and arts.

Suwaso also pledges to buy, install, and maintain a new children's park.

A total of $25 million will be invested by Suwaso for renovations of existing structures and new improvements on the Coral Ocean Resort premises. Santos said Suwaso plans to further repair and renovate existing buildings damaged by past super typhoons. She said new improvements include the construction of 200 rooms and villas, a Spanish garden, a golf starter building, beach club, new restaurant, and an upgraded swimming pool.

UOG Board of Regents announces new officers

Guerrero

Diaz

Naholowaa

McKeever

The University of Guam Board of Regents has ushered in a new era of leadership, with Lesley- Anne Leon Guerrero elected as chairperson during its Sept. 26 meeting. Agapito "Pete" A. Diaz is the new vice chairperson, and Mike W. Naholowaa continues in his role as the board's treasurer. This marks a pivotal moment as the board builds on recent successes to advance UOG's mission of empowering the region through education, innovation, and community engagement.

Leon Guerrero is senior vice president and chief experience officer at the Bank of Guam and has served on the BOR since 2019.

"I have seen the great work that has gone into modernizing UOG from the inside out," said Leon Guerrero. "There is no shortage of talent here, and I look forward to advocating for greater support for the University because every dollar invested back into our programs and facilities works to strengthen and uplift our island community and our region."

Leon Guerrero previously served as vice chairperson and now succeeds outgoing chairperson Sandra H. McKeever whose term as regent ends on Jan. 31, 2025. McKeever's leadership helped guide the University through legislative budget shortfalls, the transition from outgoing president Thomas Krise to current president Anita Borja Enriquez in 2023, and through the year-long development of UOG's five-year strategic plan, Tulos Mo'na: Propelling Forward Together.

McKeever is the president and CEO of Asia Pacific Financial Management Group and an alumna of UOG.

"My time as a student at the University of Guam was a transformative chapter in my life. It shaped my values, character, and purpose, and taught me the power of education and critical thinking. I'm deeply grateful to my professors whose dedication inspired me to carry that same passion into my career, helping others build a solid financial foundation. I thank God, the UOG Community, President Enriquez, and the Board of Regents for the opportunity to serve and give back to the institution that has given me so much."

Enriquez expressed her congratulations to the newly elected officers and recognized McKeever for her leadership during her time on the board.

"I look forward to working with our new officers and the entire Board of Regents as we continue fulfilling our commitment to advancing the University," said Enriquez. "And on behalf of the university community, we thank Cchairperson McKeever for her dedicated service, which has continued building a strong foundation for UOG's future."

The next quarterly Board of Regents meeting will be held on Thursday, Dec. 12, at the RFK Library Silent Room on the university's campus.

Members of the Board of Regents also include:

- Roland S. Certeza, regent
- Dr. Janice P. Malilay, regent
- Joanna T. Chun, regent
- Christopher "Chris" L.C. Duenas, regent
- Julie A.L. Laxamana, student regent

President Enriquez serves as the executive secretary of the board.

The University of Guam Board of Regents is the governing body of the University, established in 1963 through Public Law 7-66. Expanded to nine members in 1984, the BOR oversees UOG's operations, appoints the president, manages university funds, and sets policies on employment and compensation. Regents serve staggered six-year terms, including one student regent, and approve UOG's annual budget for submission to the Guam Legislature. ***(PR)***

Radewagen applauds colleague Waltz as National Security Advisor nominee

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Delegate Uifa'atali Amata Radewagen (R-A. Samoa) is applauding the nomination of her colleague Congressman Mike Waltz of Florida, a former Green Beret, as National Security Advisor.

Radewagen and Waltz serve together on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and its Subcommittee on the Indo-Pacific. Waltz also works directly on national security issues as part of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the House Armed Services Committee.

"Congressman Waltz has an exceptional range of experience and is a strong addition to the President's national security team," said Radewagen. "He is the first Green Beret elected to Congress, where we will certainly miss him, but his knowledge and background will be a greater asset to the country as National Security Advisor."

Waltz served in the U.S. Army Special Forces, the Green Berets, after graduating Ranger School. He served multiple tours in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Africa. A combat veteran, Waltz was decorated with four Bronze Stars, including two for valor.

He continues to serve in the Army National Guard where he holds the rank of colonel.

Waltz has worked in defense policy roles at the Pentagon under Defense secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates, and worked at the White House as the counterterrorism adviser to the Vice President. He is a published author, and served several terms in Congress.

Amata highlights nomination of colleague Rep. Ratcliffe for CIA

"Congratulations to yet another former colleague in Congressman John Ratcliffe, nominated to return to our intelligence community and lead the Central Intelligence Agency," said Radewagen. "He has experience as a former director of National Intelligence. We know the Pacific region is important to our national intelligence analysis and our national security strategies. Congressman Ratcliffe will work well with Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard."

Amata welcomes attorney Whitaker as NATO ambassador designate

"Former acting Attorney General Matt Whitaker will clearly represent President Trump to our NATO allies, and work well with Secretary of State Marco Rubio and our Defense leadership," said Radewagen. "Several of our closest NATO allies have key Pacific roles as well, including France, and the U.K. as part of AUKUS, while strategic interests regarding the CCP are worldwide, with NATO placing a growing emphasis on Pacific engagement." ***(PR)***

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-007-25

SUBMISSION DATE: NOVEMBER 27, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"INSURANCE BROKERAGE SERVICES"

THE BID PACKAGE AND OTHER CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING OCTOBER 28, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "CPA INSURANCE BROKERAGE SERVICES (RFP-007-25)" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., NOVEMBER 27, 2024. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: OCTOBER 28, 2024

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-25-003

CONSTRUCTION OF AS MATUIS TEMPORARY TANK

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the construction of **a temporary water tank in As Matuis.**

The project consists of a temporary water tank in As Matuis with the furnishing of all labor, supervision, equipment and materials for a new temporary fiberglass tank located in As Matuis. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in Two Hundred Seventy (270) calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **November 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM (CHST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hardcopies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-25-003, Construction of As Matuis Temporary Tank" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (CHST) on December 19, 2024,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time.

Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (CHST) on December 3, 2024** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address, manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

KEVIN O. WATSON
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Mark Rabago EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Trump should bring on a great American housing boom

Most Americans, from both parties, say the government needs to increase the supply of affordable housing. For President-elect Donald Trump, that should offer a good opportunity to summon his instincts for development—and self-promotion—to get America building again. Call it the "Trump Building Boom."

The problem is clear: For more than a decade, housing construction has failed to keep up with U.S. population growth and household formation. This has helped drive a nearly 50% increase in the median sales price of houses and a similar jump in rents, outstripping an 18% gain in real median household income. The income required to afford a new single-family home is now almost twice what it was five years ago, and nearly half of renting households spend more than 30% of their income on rent. By some measures, homelessness is at a record level.

Normally, rising prices should spur construction, and there are signs that is starting to happen. But why not faster? For one thing, in many of the cities with the most severe housing shortages, local zoning restrictions, land-use regulations, rent controls, affordable-housing mandates and permitting requirements—among other burdens—limit development.

Sustained attention to complex problems does not come naturally to Trump. But as a second-generation real estate developer, he has had plenty of personal experience with the bureaucratic obstacles and political opposition that housing plans often encounter. This might offer him an advantage in helping the U.S. build the estimated 2.5 million homes the country needs. Success would depend on three things.

First, the administration should encourage a wave of rezoning and deregulation at state and local levels, which is the source of most of the friction. In his first term, Trump promised an effort along these lines and established a council to study the problem. This time around, he should act on its recommendations, including by helping local governments dial back costly requirements such as parking minimums and minimum lot sizes and speed up permitting. Perhaps the "freedom cities" Trump says he wants to build on federal land (details TBD) might be exemplars in this regard.

More prosaically, the administration should change federal policies that needlessly raise the cost of construction. This could include reducing certain tariffs—such as those on Canadian lumber, which were sharply increased during the Biden administration—as well as expediting environmental reviews and reducing red tape. To help address the 288,000 job openings in construction, up from an average of 190,000 since 2000, Trump could create incentives for community colleges and vocational schools to provide relevant training and offer more visas for qualified immigrants.

Finally, Trump has promised to reduce interest rates, which would certainly help make housing more affordable. The

See BOOM on Page 7

The news media is at-fault! They backed TRUMP!
You are crazy! They backed Biden and Harris!
The progressive wing of our Party caused us to Lose!
Are you saying it's because they kicked Biden out?
What happened to the Democrat Party?!
Trump killed it!
Oh, please let's all of us take a deep breath and relax!
DEMOCRATS MARRED IN BLAME GAME !!!
©2024 DANIEL J. KING FEATURES SYNDICATE

If Trump deports farm workers, who will be left to pick California's crops?

By TAD WEBER
The Sacramento Bee

Do you enjoy fruits and vegetables? Assuming the answer is yes, come next year who do you think will harvest the oranges, almonds, lettuce, strawberries, tomatoes and the other 300-plus crops grown in California?

Who will work in the state's dairies, meat plants, and food processing factories, most located in the Central Valley?

Republican President-elect Donald Trump promises to begin a massive deportation effort the first day he takes office in January. Many Trump voters chose him over Democrat Kamala Harris precisely because of concerns about undocumented people who have illegally entered the United States. Trump vows to get millions of undocumented people out of the country. For the first time, even ag-rich Fresno County went for Trump.

Here is a sobering fact: According to La Cooperativa, a Sacramento-based farm-worker assistance organization, 75% of California's farm workers are undocumented. Between one-third and one-half of all farm workers in America are in California—roughly 500,000 to 800,000 people. Altogether, there are 11 million undocumented people in the nation, according to the American Immigration Council.

Trump's pick for border security, Tom Homan, a former head of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, pledges to "run the biggest deportation operation this country's ever seen."

Economists say that America prospers because of the undocumented workforce that takes demanding jobs in a range of industries.

Ana Padilla, executive director of UC Merced's Community and Labor Center, said in an email that most workers in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and landscaping are noncitizens. "Additionally, roughly half of the workers in animal production are noncitizens. One third in food processing are noncitizens. And about a fourth of food service workers are noncitizens."

California growers produce a third of the nation's vegetables and three-quarters of its fruits and nuts. California's farmers must have a workforce for planting, tending and harvesting.

So here is advice for the president-elect and the next Congress: Create a deportation exemption or other legal status for farm workers and those in related industries. Otherwise, the food supply Americans depend on will be at risk.

Unemployed Americans have shown time and again that they don't want to do the back-breaking field work or assembly-line slaughtering of meat plants that immigrants are willing to tackle.

Impacts on food supply

What could be a bad result of mass deportations of farm workers? For starters, higher food costs.

If a farmer cannot get a crop fully harvested due to a labor shortage, whatever crop does get picked will become more valuable and thus more expensive when it finally reaches the grocery store.

Americans will also likely have to depend on imported produce. Growers in other countries will see the opportunity to raise prices. America has long benefited from a low-cost food production system based on home-grown produce. If the U.S. starts depending on other countries for its food, costs will rise, and national security will be weakened.

Agriculture is a huge part of the Fresno County economy. The county is one of the top-growing regions in the nation and accounted for $8.5 billion in gross revenues in 2023.

Just to the south, Tulare County is another top performer, accounting for $7.9 billion in gross sales in 2023.

The spin-off impacts of harm to farming would be immense in the Central Valley. From equipment sales to chemical suppliers to specialized services like irrigation and field leveling to secondary industries, like clothing retailers, tool shops and even restaurants, the Valley economy is built on farming.

Trump's deportations are costly

The American Immigration Council projects mammoth costs to the federal budget to carry out the deportations that Trump has vowed.

Using government data to make its projection, the council says it would cost $88 billion to deport 1 million people in the first year, most of that going to the creation of detention camps.

If Trump's goal was to rid America of all its undocumented residents—the council's estimate is 11 million people as of 2022—the cost would total $315 billion. It would take a decade to realistically carry out such a huge deportation as imagined by Homan.

In 2022, undocumented people paid $46.8 billion in federal taxes and another $29.3 billion in state taxes, the council says. Undocumented workers contributed $22.6 billion to Social Security and $5.7 billion to Medicare. Undocumented workers don't enjoy the benefits, but their revenues would disappear when deportations occur.

California's farm economy at risk

The details remain to be worked out on Trump's deportation promise. But when it comes to our food supply and agriculture, Trump and Congress need to figure out exemptions or legal status for workers. Short of that, the food we so easily take for granted will either become more expensive, or simply unavailable.

And the service people that keep society running smoothly

See DEPORTS on Page 7

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Concerns regarding HLB 23-59

Dear Senate President DeLeon Guerrero, House Speaker Villagomez, and SNILD chair Sablan,

On behalf of the 200-plus residents living at ANAKS Ocean View Hill, we write to express our grave concerns regarding the proposed amendments in HLB 23-59 to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013, as amended.

Article I, § 9, of the CNMI Constitution provides that: "Each person has the right to a clean and healthful public environment in all areas including the land, air and water...Harmful and unnecessary noise pollution, and the storage of nuclear or radioactive material and the dumping or storage of any type of nuclear waste within the surface or submerged lands and waters of the Northern Mariana Islands, are prohibited except as provided by law."

The current version of the right to a clean and healthful environment singles out two issues—noise pollution and radioactive/nuclear waste—as particularly detrimental to residents. This language is a result of the Second Constitutional Convention, which amended Article I, § 9. The framers of this provision stated that it applied to residential neighborhoods. The Second Northern Marianas Constitutional Convention, Report to the Convention by the Committee on Personal Rights & Natural Resources, Committee Recommendation No. 28, discussed the need for tranquil and peaceful residential spaces, stating, "the peacefulness of our lifestyle and the tranquility of our people will be protected if we include the prohibition of noise pollution coming from any unjustified source or sources. Under this provision any activities resulting in excessive noise should be located or relocated away from public areas, particularly residential areas..."

The second Constitutional Convention intended the right to be free of excessive noise to apply to residential communities, including ANAKS. ANAKS has been a part of the CNMI for 40 years, and is home to a broad range of residents, including families with children, retirees, the self-employed, as well as many professionals in the CNMI, such as attorneys, judges, teachers, business owners, governmental representatives (e.g., the Japan Consul), and large number of medical professionals working at CHCC and elsewhere. Atkins Kroll's current facility threatens the residents of ANAKS with excessive noise pollution.

We are extremely concerned about the proposed amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law in HLB 23-59, which would change the Zoning Law by adding a new definition of "Automobile Sales and Service" to the Zoning Law. As you may know, Atkins Kroll Saipan, Inc., an Inchcape Company, proposed an identical amendment to the definition of Automobile Sales and Service to the Commonwealth Zoning Board by letter dated March 4, 2024. Inchcape/AK later withdrew this proposal from consideration. Instead, they have adopted a strategy of trying to persuade the legislators in the Saipan and Northern Islands Delegation to amend the Zoning Law.

HLB 23-59 changes the definition of Automobile Sales and Service to include all aspects of vehicle repair, general, such as body work, glass repair, and automotive painting. Moreover, HLB 23-59 seems to expand sales, rental, and body work beyond automobiles, because it refers to motor vehicles generally. In the Zoning Law, motor vehicles include heavy equipment, boats, trucks, under vehicle repair, general. These activities are currently allowed as of right only in Industrial areas, and in Mixed Commercial areas require a conditional use permit from the Zoning Board. Automobile sales and service is limited to these two zones only.

HLB 23-59 changes the procedure for mixed commercial districts, which are often adjacent to residences and occasionally to Residential districts, such as the village of Gualo Rai, to allow these activities as of right. This means applying for a permit from the Zoning Office, without ever getting a hearing before the Zoning Board.

On behalf of all the residents of the CNMI, we point out that HLB-23-59 would allow any person or company selling new or used cars and other motor vehicles to erect a paint booth and body shop, and service all kinds of motor vehicles, including heavy equipment immediately next to many of the villages on the island. To reiterate an earlier statement, the law currently entitles these CNMI residents to a hearing before the Zoning Board, if they do not want this activity next door to their home. Why change the right to a hearing? The bottom line is that no one wants these activities to occur immediately next to their homes.

This change affects many more people than the ones living at ANAKS. In considering HLB 23-59, the Legislature must also consider all the residences and villages adjoining or close to mixed commercial districts. Looking at the current version of the Saipan Zoning map, it seems that there are residences adjacent to or near mixed commercial districts in Tanapag on the east side of Middle Road, at the bottom of Navy Hill, in Chinatown off of Chalan Pale Arnold Road to the east, in Gualo Rai, San Jose, As Lito, Chalan Kiya, Chalan Kanoa, Chalan Piao, Susupe, Afetna, and Dandan. There are mixed commercial districts abutting tourist resort and Beach Road districts. Body shops, paint booths, and heavy equipment and diesel truck repair are also incompatible with the idyllic island getaway the CNMI strives to present to tourists. There is no reason the SNILD should change what has been properly regarded as industrial activity under the Zoning Law to a permitted use next to homes of individuals and families and in tourist districts.

We believe that you, as legislators, want to defend, uphold, and protect the CNMI Constitution and the constitutional rights of the residents of the CNMI, including their rights to a clean and healthful environment. If you approve HLB 23-59, general vehicle repair and auto body and paint shops will be permissible in close proximity to a majority of residential neighborhoods in the CNMI, allowing heavy equipment repair for dump trucks, bulldozers, school and tour buses, boat engines, etc., and few if any of these businesses will be as well maintained as the Inchcape/AK facility. It is difficult to understand why the elected representatives of the people of the CNMI would consider making this amendment for the benefit of a multibillion-dollar multinational company, Inchcape and its subsidiary Atkins Kroll. Inchcape/AK has completed its facility and they do not need any further assistance from the CNMI government, particularly not at the expense of the nearby residents at ANAKS, and the expense of many other CNMI residents that may be adversely affected by such facilities in the future run by businesses that are less well-known and reputable than Inchcape/AK.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our formal comments on HLB 23-59. We appreciate your time and consideration of our position when deliberating on this proposed legislation.

Respectfully,

ANAKS board of directors

Bart Jackson, president
Dr. Martin Rohringer, vice president
Larry Lee, secretary
Tomas Abel, treasurer
Viola Alepuyo, director

DEPORTS

From page 7

will be gone.

Is that what you had in mind, Trump voters?

Newly re-elected GOP Reps. David Valadao (Hanford) and Vince Fong (Bakersfield-Clovis) should join forces with Democrat Rep. Jim Costa (Fresno) in a bipartisan effort to create exemptions or legal status for agricultural workers so they won't get deported.

Otherwise, farmers and dairy owners face unparalleled labor shortages and the Central Valley will confront a drastically reduced economy.

BOOM

From page 6

problem is that many of his policies would tend to make that job much harder. Here the president should try to be pragmatic. A commitment to respect the Federal Reserve's independence would cost him little but help a lot. So might a pledge to cut spending and to moderate the many tax cuts he has talked about. Trump's record suggests that any such compromise is a long shot. Then again, if there's one consistency in Trump's career, it's that he defies expectations.

Providing an ample supply of housing—and making life more affordable—should be a goal of every policymaker. Trump will arrive in office with an opportunity to achieve that goal. "Build, baby, build," you might say.

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A betrayal of trust and heritage: Where are our indigenous leaders?

Nov. 25, 2024, was a heartbreaking and infuriating day for our Chamorro and Carolinian people! Why are our indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian priests consistently overlooked to lead our faith and people? Are our indigenous priests not deemed worthy enough? Last night and today, the pain in their eyes was undeniable—our community deeply feels the weight of this injustice.

The Church in any Pacific culture, is supposed to protect the language and culture. Our Chamorro and Carolinian language and culture have withstood centuries of foreign domination. We survived the Spanish, German, and Japanese cultural purges, only to now face the slow erasure of our heritage by the very institution that should be defending it—the Catholic Church. This is nothing less than a tragedy for the people of the CNMI.

Consider this: What do we get in return after several hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding from our own Chamorro and Carolinian community to educate Archbishop Ryan Jimenez? He abandons the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa to chase personal ambition in Guam, vying for a higher title. In his place, he installs a bishop with no connection to the CNMI, someone who cannot truly understand or lead our people—shame on Ryan and shame on Tagle for allowing this to happen.

During Ryan's tenure as bishop, we witnessed a systematic dismantling of our diocese. The schools on Tinian and Rota were shuttered. *The North Star*, our only indigenous Catholic print publication, ceased operation. Chamorro Masses disappeared from the Cathedral. Our beloved churches fell into disrepair—all to "save money." But save money for what? For Ryan's global travels and pursuit of prestige as he positions himself to climb the Church hierarchy? Is this what leadership looks like?

This is not about faith—it is about power and ambition. Ryan's focus was not on evangelizing or uplifting the people of the CNMI; it was on funding his doctorate and seeking a cardinal's title. And now, just three months after his departure, we suddenly have a new bishop hand-picked by Ryan and Tagle. It took seven years to appoint Ryan, but only three months for this? The manipulation is blatant, and the people of the CNMI deserve answers.

To add insult to injury, Tagle, head of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, oversees this charade. Is this his idea of evangelizing our islands—ignoring the voices of the faithful and treating the CNMI as an afterthought? His actions mock our faith and our heritage.

Let's be clear: Our Chamorro and Carolinian ancestors protected and nurtured the Church through generations. They fought to preserve their faith alongside their culture, ensuring that both thrived against unimaginable odds. Now, it is our turn to defend our Church and identity.

We must rise together. This is not a time for silence or passivity. Share this message, speak out, and let the Church know that the Chamorro and Carolinian people will not stand idly by as our Indigenous Priests are stripped of their dignity and rightful place.

God save the CNMI. May He guide us in defending our faith and our people.

Gary Sword
Via email

Saipan Mayor's Office to host town hall meeting to address criminality concerns

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Saipan Mayor's Office is set to host its inaugural town hall meeting on Dec. 4, offering residents a platform to voice concerns and propose solutions to combat the rising crime rates in the community.

The event, scheduled to take place from 6pm to 8pm at the William S. Reyes Middle School main hall cafeteria, invites residents of Precinct 2 to engage directly with Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Blas Camacho and other officials and hopefully foster community dialogue and collaboration to enhance safety across Saipan's villages.

Benjamin F. Maratita, public relations specialist for the Saipan Mayor's Office, told the media that the goal is to create a safe and secure environment for everyone and that town hall is an opportunity for residents to share their experiences, voice concerns, and offer constructive ideas on how everyone can work together to address crime in our neighborhoods.

The Saipan Mayor's Office encourages community members to spread the word about the town hall, emphasizing the importance of collective effort in tackling safety challenges.

This meeting is part of a broader initiative to prioritize public safety and community well-being. The Saipan Mayor's Office expressed hope that the feedback and ideas generated will shape future policies and programs aimed at reducing crime and improving residents' quality of life.

In an interview with Camacho, he shared that after speaking to community members about the recent crimes being committed in villages, he arranged meeting with Department of Public Safety Commissioner Anthony Macaranas and Attorney General Edward Manibusan.

"I talked to them about the information that I gathered in the community. We need action."

As someone with law enforcement experience, Camacho said that when community members shared that they felt like they needed to resort to violence in order to protect themselves, he was concerned.

"The main thing is burglary is increasing rapidly. There's a victim where a motorcycle or dirt bike has been stolen and other stuff and big items. I don't want to say anything bad about law enforcement, but they have questioned the community, the victim of the crime. So, that's why I called that meeting with the commissioner and share with the commissioner the frustration of the victims of a crime."

Camacho said that he has plans to revive the neighborhood watch program beginning in Chalan Kanoa.

"It was in Chalan Kanoa where I met a lot of law-abiding citizens sharing their frustration. It is an island-wide [issue], but we're going to tackle it first in Chalan Kanoa."

For more information, residents are urged to contact the Saipan Mayor's Office and make their voices heard at this important event.

Business

IT&E expands 5G coverage in the CNMI, Guam

HARMON, Guam—IT&E is excited to announce the expansion of its 5G coverage in the Marianas and Guam, to include the launch of 5G services in Garapan and Susupe on Saipan, and the deployment of additional 5G sites in Guam to increase coverage to 70% of the island's population.

These milestones mark a significant step forward in connectivity, speed, and reliability for businesses and residents alike. The expansion of IT&E's 5G coverage represents a new era of fast, seamless communication, designed to meet the demands of modern users and connect our communities in ways never before possible.

"Expanding our 5G coverage in the region represents our commitment to bringing the latest in technology to all our customers," said David Gibson, CEO of IT&E. "As we connect people, businesses, and communities to the possibilities of 5G, we are creating opportunities for growth, innovation, and enhanced quality of life for the people we serve."

5G technology empowers users to explore new digital horizons and boosts IT&E's network capacity to alleviate network congestion, decrease latency, and enhance user experiences for both residential and enterprise subscribers. 5G-compatible devices, including the latest smartphones, are available at IT&E to offer the full experience.

IT&E remains committed to connecting our community to who and what matters the most when it matters the most. Upgrades to existing network sites throughout Marianas will continue to expand 5G availability to even more areas and subscribers.

IT&E is the leading provider of fiber connectivity, datacenter, fixed wireless, and mobility services in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. With the widest footprint in the region, IT&E has been serving Guam and the Marianas for more than 35 years. Learn more at www.ite.net. ***(PR)***

Couple charged in ring suspected of stealing $1M in Lululemon clothes

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A Connecticut couple has been charged in Minnesota with being part of a shoplifting ring suspected of stealing around $1 million in goods across the country from the upscale athletic wear retailer Lululemon.

Jadion Anthony Richards, 44, and Akwele Nickeisha Lawes-Richards, 45, both of Danbury, Connecticut, were charged this month with one felony count of organized retail theft. Both went free last week after posting bail bonds of $100,000 for him and $30,000 for her, court records show. They're due back in Ramsey County District Court in St. Paul on Dec. 16.

According to the criminal complaints, a Lululemon investigator had been tracking the pair even before police first confronted them on Nov. 14 at a store in suburban Roseville. The investigator told police the couple were responsible for hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses across the country, the complaints said. They would steal items and make fraudulent returns, it said.

Police found suitcases containing more than $50,000 worth of Lululemon clothing when they searched the couple's hotel room in Bloomington, the complaint said.

According to the investigator, they were also suspected in thefts from Lululemon stores in Colorado, Utah, New York and Connecticut, the complaint said. Within Minnesota, they were also accused of thefts at stores in Minneapolis and the suburbs of Woodbury, Edina and Minnetonka.

The investigator said the two were part of a group that would usually travel to a city and hit Lululemon stores there for two days, return to the East Coast to exchange the items without receipts for new items, take back the new items with the return receipts for credit card refunds, then head back out to commit more thefts, the complaint said.

In at least some of the thefts, it said, Richards would enter the store first and buy one or two cheap items. He'd then return to the sales floor where, with help from Lawes-Richards, they would remove a security sensor from another item and put it on one of the items he had just purchased. Lawes-Richards and another woman would then conceal leggings under their clothing.

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting
Thursday, December 12, 2024 | 2:00 PM
Multi-Purpose Center • Beach Road, Susupe
Tel: 670-234-9661/2 • Fax: 670-234-9666
E-mail: ZoningBoard@cnmizoning.com

AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of 12/12/24 Agenda
3. Adoption of 11/21/24 Meeting Minutes
4. Communications
5. Public Comments *(not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)*

B. Public Hearings:
1. **Conditional Use Application ##2024-2758– ACME Holdings CNMI, LLC** proposes to occupy and utilize **Two (2)** existing warehouses within the Chalan Kiya Industrial Center for its *"Manufacturing and Processing"* use. The site is located on **Lot 1734NEW-5-R1** in the village of **Chalan Kiya.** This area is zoned as **Mixed Commercial.**

2. **Conditional Use Application #2024-2320- Soon Hong Chang** proposes to construct **Thirty (30)** glamping structures measuring **22'.8" (L) x 23'.8" (W) x 16' (H)** each, along with the following, for its *"Mixed Use- Glamping"*. The site is located on **Lot 1603-15, 1603-16, 1603-17, 1603-18,** and **1603-19** in the village of **Gualo Rai**. This area is zoned as **Village Residential:**
   a. One snack bar measuring **20' (L) x 40' (W) x 10' (H),**
   b. One office building measuring **23' 8" (L) x 22' 8" (W) x 16' (H),**
   c. one Single-Family Dwelling measuring **23' 8" (L) x 22' 8" (W) x 16' (H),** and
   d. one (1) swimming pool measuring **20' (L) x 40' (W)**

3. **Conditional Use Application #2025-0262 - Sugar Leaf LLC dba Asa-ya** propose to utilize an existing unit on the second floor of the Misa Building 2 with floor area measuring **38' (L) x 19.5' (W)** for its *"Cannabis Retail"* use. The site is located on **Lot 001 D 42** in the village of **Garapan**. This area is zoned as **Garapan Core.**

C. Old Business. None

D. New Business. None

E. Report from Zoning Administrator
1. Operations (Permitting and Enforcement)
2. Office Updates
   a. Nuisance Abatement and Blighted Property Maintenance Act of 2018 – Outreach and Enforcement
   b. Government Agencies roles on Public Nuisance

F. Report from Legal Counsel

G. Executive Session

H. Announcements

I. Adjournment

/s/Henry S. Hofschneider, Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING
for
Sugar Leaf LLC dba Asa-ya
Conditional Use Application
#2025-0262

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. **Sugar Leaf LLC dba Asa-ya** propose to utilize an existing unit on the second floor of the Misa Building 2 with floor area measuring **38' (L) x 19.5' (W)** for its "Cannabis Retail" use. The site is located on **Lot 001 D 42** in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as **Garapan Core.**

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: **December 12, 2024**
Time: **2:00 pm**
Place: **Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, December 11, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry Hofschneider, Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING
for
Soon Hong Chang- Glamping
Conditional Use Application
#2024-2320

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. **Soon Hong Chang** proposes to construct **Thirty (30)** glamping structures with each measuring **22'.8" (L) x 23'.8" (W) x 16' (H),** One (1) snack bar measuring **20' (L) x 40' (W) x 10' (H),** One (1) office building measuring **23' 8" (L) x 22' 8" (W) x 16' (H),** one (1) Single-Family Dwelling measuring **23' 8" (L) x 22' 8" (W) x 16' (H),** and one (1) swimming pool measuring **20' (L) x 40' (W)** for its "*Mixed Use- Glamping*". The site is located on **Lot 1603-15, 1603-16, 1603-17, 1603-18,** and **1603-19** in the village of **Gualo Rai.** This area is zoned as **Village Residential.**

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: **December 12, 2024**
Time: **2:00 pm**
Place: **Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, December 11, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry Hofschneider, Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING
for
ACME Holdings CNMI, LLC
Conditional Use Application
#2024-2758

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. **ACME Holdings CNMI, LLC** Proposes to occupy & utilize **Two (2)** existing warehouses within the Chalan Kiya Industrial Center for its *"Manufacturing & processing"* use. The site is located on **Lot 1734NEW-5-R1** in the village of Chalan Kiya. This area is zoned as **Mixed Commercial.**

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: **December 12, 2024**
Time: **2:00 pm**
Place: **Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe**

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 3pm, December 11, 2024. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, at 5911 Chalan Pale Arnold, Chalan Laulau (former IT&E).

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Henry Hofschneider, Chairman

World

What's blocking a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah?

BEIRUT (AP)—Diplomats and other officials say there have been several sticking points in ceasefire talks to end the war between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, even as conditions for an agreement appear to be ripe.

Israel's military has killed nearly all of the militant group's top leaders, but it continues to fire missiles into Israel. Tens of thousands of Israelis who were evacuated from the border months ago are pressuring their government to help them go home. And the world wants to stop regional conflict from spreading after more than a year of fighting.

Following the latest visit to the region by a U.S. mediator, Israel hit central Beirut over the weekend, and Hezbollah responded with its biggest barrage in weeks as each applied pressure to reach a deal.

Israel and Hezbollah have exchanged fire almost daily since the day after Hamas-led militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, setting off the war in Gaza.

Israel launched a widespread bombardment of Lebanon two months ago, then a ground invasion. More than 3,500 people in Lebanon have been killed, many of them civilians.

More than 70 have been killed in Israel, over 40 of them civilians. In addition, over 50 Israeli soldiers have been killed in the ground offensive.

Here's a look at the proposal and the sticking points.

A proposed two-month ceasefire to start

The proposal under discussion to end the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah calls for an initial two-month ceasefire during which Israeli forces would withdraw from Lebanon and Hezbollah would end its armed presence along the southern border south of the Litani River.

The withdrawals would be accompanied by an influx of thousands more Lebanese army troops, who have been largely sidelined in the war, to patrol the border area along with an existing U.N. peacekeeping force.

An international committee would be set up to monitor implementation of the ceasefire agreement and of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701, which was passed in 2006 to end a monthlong war between Israel and Hezbollah but never fully implemented. Hezbollah never ended its presence in southern Lebanon, while Lebanon said Israel regularly violated its airspace and occupied small patches of its territory.

It is not clear whether a new deal would be any more successfully implemented than the one in 2006.

Michael Herzog, Israel's ambassador to Washington, told Israeli Army Radio on Monday that the deal aimed to improve surveillance and enforcement of the previous resolution. While he said there were still certain points that needed to be finalized, a deal was close and could be clinched "within days."

A U.S. official said negotiations continued to progress on Sunday, but the parties still need to work out some outstanding issues to close the deal. The official, who insisted on anonymity to discuss the private talks, declined to detail the outstanding issues.

Israel wants freedom to strike Hezbollah and other disagreements

Two Western diplomats described several points of dispute to The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss ongoing negotiations.

AP

Smoke rises after an Israeli airstrike on Dahiyeh, in the southern suburb of Beirut, Lebanon, Monday, Nov. 25, 2024.

They said Israel was asking for more guarantees to ensure that Hezbollah's weapons are removed from the border area. Israeli officials, concerned about the possibility of Hezbollah launching the kind of attack that Hamas carried out from Gaza into southern Israel, have said they would not agree to a ceasefire deal that doesn't explicitly grant them freedom to strike in Lebanon if they believe Hezbollah is violating it.

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the sensitive talks, said the issue remained a point of contention, although he said the talks were headed in a "positive direction."

Lebanese officials have said agreeing to such a deal would violate Lebanon's sovereignty. Hezbollah leader Naim Kassem has said the militant group would not agree to a deal that does not entail a "complete and comprehensive end to the aggression" and does not protect Lebanon's sovereignty.

Lebanon and Israel have also disagreed over which countries would sit on the international committee overseeing implementation of the deal and Resolution 1701.

In a sign of progress, Israel appeared to have dropped its opposition to France, which has remained close with Lebanon since its colonial rule there ended and has recently been at odds with Israel.

On Monday, an official familiar with the talks, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were discussing behind-the-scenes negotiations, said that France would be part of the monitoring committee. Lebanon's deputy parliament speaker, Elias Bousaab, also said Israel had accepted France.

But Lebanon has refused to allow Britain, a close ally of Israel. It was unclear Monday if Lebanese officials had dropped their opposition following Israel's concession.

Meanwhile, Israel does not want to enter into negotiations on 13 disputed points along the border as part of a ceasefire deal, the diplomats said.

Both sides have an interest in ending the war

A ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, the strongest of Iran's armed proxies, is expected to significantly calm regional tensions that have led to fears of war between Israel and Iran directly. It's not clear how it would affect the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza. Hezbollah had long insisted that it would not agree to a ceasefire until the war in Gaza ends, but it has now dropped that condition.

One diplomat said there are fears that if no ceasefire is reached, the war will expand further into Syria and Iraq as Israel attempts to cut off the supply of weapons from Iran to Hezbollah. Israel has carried out regular airstrikes on Iran-linked groups in Syria and has threatened to strike in Iraq, where Iran-backed militias have periodically launched drone attacks on Israel.

Geir Pedersen, the U.N. special envoy for Syria, said during a visit to Damascus on Sunday that ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon are critical to "avoid Syria being dragged even further into the conflict."

Analysts say Hezbollah has been weakened but continues to keep up steady fire into Israel, including strikes far from the border.

On Sunday, Hezbollah fired about 250 rockets and other projectiles into Israel, wounding seven people in one of the militant group's heaviest barrages in months, in response to deadly Israeli strikes in Beirut. Violent clashes continue in southern Lebanon as Israeli forces attempt to take control of strategic towns.

Israel says its goal in the war with Hezbollah is to enable displaced Israelis to safely return home. In Lebanon, a quarter of the population has been displaced, and parts of the country, particularly in south Lebanon and areas south of the capital Beirut, have been destroyed.

In Lebanon, where officials and residents are anxious for war to end, an initial rush of optimism dissipated after the Biden administration's point man on Israel and Lebanon, Amos Hochstein, left the region last week without a deal.

Many now believe no agreement will be reached before President-elect Donald Trump takes office in January.

Macros says he'll fight vice president's plot to have him killed

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday described a public threat by the vice president to have him killed by an assassin as a criminal plot and vowed to fight it, in a looming showdown between the country's two top leaders.

Vice President Sara Duterte said Saturday in an online news conference that she has contracted an assassin to kill the president, his wife and the speaker of the House of Representatives if she herself is killed, in a threat she warned was not a joke.

The national police and military immediately boosted the security of the president, and the justice department said it would summon the vice president for an investigation. The National Security Council said it considered the threat a national security concern.

The vice president, a lawyer, later tried to walk back her remarks by saying it was not an actual threat but an expression of concern about her own safety over an unspecified threat.

"Why would I kill him if not for revenge from the grave? There is no reason for me to kill him. What's the benefit for me?" Duterte told journalists.

"That criminal plot should not be allowed to pass," Marcos said in a televised statement, without mentioning Duterte by name. "I'll fight it."

"As a democratic country, we need to uphold the rule of law," Marcos said.

Marcos ran with Duterte as his vice-presidential running mate in May 2022 elections and both won landslide victories on a campaign call of national unity. In the Philippines, the two positions are elected separately.

The two leaders and their camps, however, soon had a bitter falling out over key differences, including in their approaches to China's aggressive territorial claims in the disputed South China Sea. Duterte resigned from the Marcos Cabinet in June as education secretary and head of an anti-insurgency body.

On Monday, Justice Undersecretary Jesse Andres said in a news conference that Duterte would be subpoenaed to face an investigation.

Andres called the vice president the "self-confessed mastermind" of a "premeditated plot to assassinate the president." All government resources and law enforcement agencies would be mobilized to identify the alleged assassin and determine criminal accountability, he said.

"We have to maintain order in a civilized society by adherence to the rule of law and we will apply the full strength and force of the law on this," Andres said.

Under Philippine law, such public remarks may constitute a crime of threatening to inflict a wrong on a person or their family and are punishable by a jail term and fine.

The Philippine Constitution says that if a president dies, sustains a permanent disability, is removed from office or resigns, the vice president takes over and serves the rest of the term.

Duterte said she was ready to face investigators or an impeachment complaint in Congress, but added she would also demand answers to her allegations against Marcos and his allies.

"I will also not allow what they did to me to pass," she told reporters.

The vice president is the daughter of Marcos' predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte, whose police-enforced anti-drug crackdown when he was a city mayor and later president left thousands of mostly petty drug suspects dead in killings that the International Criminal Court has been investigating as a possible crime against humanity.

Life & Style

Ed Sheeran apologizes to Man United boss for crashing interview

MANCHESTER, England (AP)—British pop star Ed Sheeran has apologized to Ruben Amorim after inadvertently interrupting the new Manchester United head coach during a live television interview.

Amorim was talking on Sky Sports after United's 1-1 draw with Ipswich on Sunday when Sheeran walked up to embrace analyst Jamie Redknapp. The interview was paused before Redknapp told Sheeran to "come and say hello in a minute."

Sheeran is a lifelong Ipswich fan and holds a minority stake in the club. He was pictured celebrating after Omari Hutchinson's equalizing goal in the game at Portman Road.

"Apologies if I offended Amorim yesterday, didn't actually realize he was being interviewed at the time, was popping to say hi and bye to Jamie," Sheeran wrote on his Instagram story Monday.

AP

Ipswich Town fan Ed Sheeran, top, cheers for his team during the English Premier League soccer match between Ipswich Town and Manchester United at Portman Road stadium in Ipswich, England, Sunday, Nov. 24, 2024.

Redknapp posted pictures on his Instagram account of Sheeran in the Sky studio with analysts Roy Keane and Izzy Christiansen, as well as presenter Kelly Cates.

It was Amorim's first game since taking over at United and started in explosive fashion with Marcus Rashford scoring after two minutes. But the points were shared after Hutchinson's deflected effort.

Last week, Ipswich CEO Mark Ashton said Sheeran had helped the club sign a new player in the offseason when taking a Zoom call with him just before going on stage with Taylor Swift.

Drake will open his Australia tour same day rival Kendrick Lamar performs at Super Bowl

TORONTO (AP)—Drake has announced that his first tour of Australia in eight years will begin on the same date as rival Kendrick Lamar's Super Bowl halftime performance.

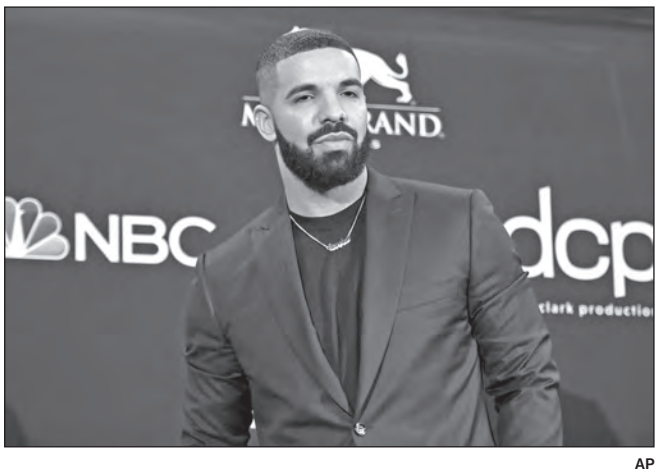
The Toronto rapper announced the tour during a livestream Sunday night with Félix Lengyel, a Quebec streamer.

Drake said the tour will begin on Feb. 9, the same date Lamar is due to take the stage at Caesars Superdome in New Orleans, a connection Drake didn't make in the video.

He said the tour will include stops in Melbourne, Sydney and the Gold Coast and will continue "until, like, March something."

"I'm just going to go to Australia for now. It's been eight years," he said. "I love it there."

Representatives for Drake did not immediately respond to a request for more information about the tour or when tickets would go on sale.



AP

Drake poses at the Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas on May 1, 2019.

The tour follows a public diss battle between Drake and Lamar, which saw them attack the other in songs including "Taylor Made Freestyle" by Drake, and Lamar's "Not Like Us."

Lamar's track is nominated for five Grammys, including record of the year and song of the year.

Drake was not nominated for any Grammys this year, but his representatives did not immediately respond to questions about whether he submitted any work for consideration. In previous years he has opted not to.

Vandal smashes Ebenezer Scrooge's tombstone used in 'A Christmas Carol' movie

LONDON (AP)—If life imitates art, a vandal in the English countryside may be haunted by The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come.

Police in the town of Shrewsbury are investigating how a tombstone that marked the fictional grave of Ebenezer Scrooge was destroyed. The movie prop used in the 1984 adaption of "A Christmas Carol" was kept in place and became a tourist attraction.

Town Clerk Helen Ball said the town is discussing what should be done to fix or replace the stone that is "hugely popular" with residents and visitors. This time of year, organized tours of locations used in the movie visit the grounds of St. Chad's Church to see the marker.

"There's not much to see other than broken bits of the gravestone," Ball told The Associated Press. "You can't see that it says Ebenezer Scrooge at the moment because it's so damaged. It's hugely disrespectful."

AP

In this picture, provided by the West Mercia Police on Monday, Nov. 25, 2024, a smashed movie prop tombstone that was used for the "A Christmas Carol" movie is seen in Shrewsbury, England.

The film, one of dozens of adaptations of the Charles Dickens' classic, starred George C. Scott as the cold-hearted curmudgeon. After going to sleep on Christmas Eve, Scrooge is visited by the ghosts of past, present and future and shown the error of his ways to become a kinder, more generous person.

The future ghost shows Scrooge what will become of his life if he doesn't change. He's eventually led to a cemetery where the ghost brushes snow from a gravestone that reveals his name. Scrooge, distraught by all he's seen, vows to turn his life around.

West Mercia Police said the stone was vandalized sometime between Thursday and Sunday. Photos showed it broken into several pieces.

If the vandal is caught, Ball said she wouldn't mind seeing poetic justice served.

"If the ghosts of past, present and future would like to visit (the vandals) in the middle of the night and drop them and break them in pieces, I think that would be a perfect punishment," she said.

Aunt's gambling addiction puts relationship at risk

DEAR ABBY: How do I handle an elderly aunt who has a gambling problem? I live in a town with casinos. She lives in another state four hours away. She calls me often to ask to stay with me, and if I am traveling, she asks to use my house, etc.

A year ago, she called me to help her get excluded from gambling in the state where she lives because she was out of control. She can no longer gamble where she lives, cannot afford a hotel to go to towns with a casino and sees me as her gambling getaway.

I have explained that I have a roommate, and my place is small. I have no interest in someone who spends hours at a craps table coming into my home (I'm health conscious), and I flat out cannot accommodate her as a guest. She won't give up! Is my only option to end communication with her?

NOT BETTING ON HER

DEAR NOT BETTING: Screening her calls is one option. The other is to keep repeating your mantra that you cannot accommodate her because you have a roommate and your place is too small. Then encourage her to find another hobby. If you do, she may stop asking you and look for another enabler.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm in middle school and part of a large friend group. I have one friend, "Kaleigh," who completely changed last year because of the influence of another girl. Kaleigh started saying inappropriate things and talking only about boys. She never did that before she became "best friends" with the other girl. It has ruined both of their reputations.

I can't decide if I should confront them and, if I did, what to say. I don't want either of them to be mad at me. We have had arguments before, and it ends up bad for the group when anyone gets into an argument with them. They also frequently get into arguments with each other, and somehow the whole group gets involved.

This has been going on for a year, and it has put a strain on the group. I don't know if I can handle more of this. I am not sure they will be easy to reason with if I confront them. What should I do?

MORE DRAMA IN TENNESSEE

DEAR MORE DRAMA: You stated that you are part of a large friend group. You can't "save" or change Kaleigh, and telling her she is ruining her reputation may come across as jealousy. Rather than confront them, start concentrating on friendships with other girls in the group. One thing I have realized over the years is you can never have enough friends.

■■■

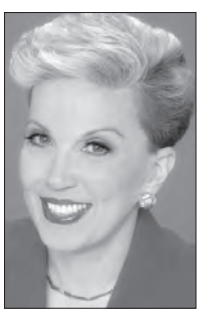
DEAR READERS: Tomorrow is Thanksgiving, and no Thanksgiving would be complete without sharing the traditional prayer penned by my dear late mother:

Oh, Heavenly Father,

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

We thank Thee for food and remember the hungry.
We thank Thee for health and remember the sick.
We thank Thee for friends and remember the friendless.
We thank Thee for freedom and remember the enslaved.
May these remembrances stir us to service.
That Thy gifts to us may be used for others.
Amen.
Have a happy and safe celebration, everyone!

Love, ABBY

■■■

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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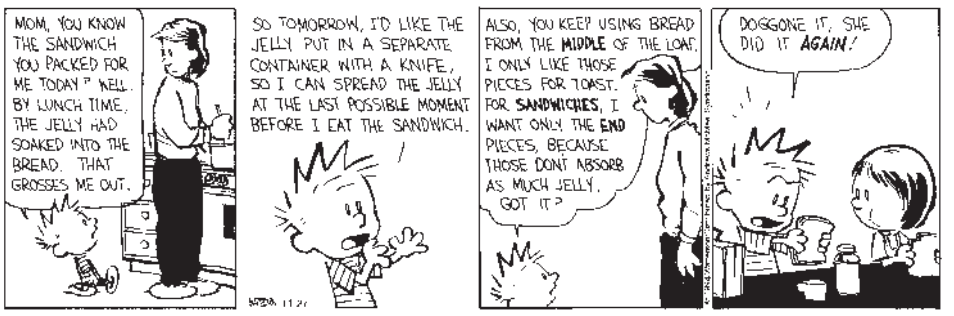
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

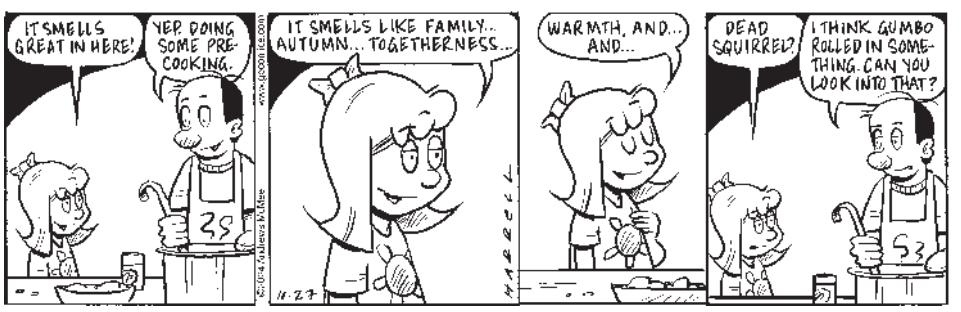

MOM, YOU KNOW THE SANDWICH YOU PACKED FOR ME TODAY? WELL, BY LUNCH TIME, THE JELLY HAD SOAKED INTO THE BREAD. THAT GROSSES ME OUT.
SO TOMORROW, I'D LIKE THE JELLY PUT IN A SEPARATE CONTAINER WITH A KNIFE, SO I CAN SPREAD THE JELLY AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT BEFORE I EAT THE SANDWICH.
ALSO, YOU KEEP USING BREAD FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE LOAF. I ONLY LIKE THOSE PIECES FOR TOAST. FOR SANDWICHES, I WANT ONLY THE END PIECES, BECAUSE THOSE DON'T ABSORB AS MUCH JELLY. GOT IT?
DOGGONE IT, SHE DID IT AGAIN!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


IT SMELLS GREAT IN HERE!
YEP. DOING SOME PRE-COOKING.
IT SMELLS LIKE FAMILY... AUTUMN... TOGETHERNESS...
WARMTH, AND... AND...
DEAD SQUIRREL?
I THINK GUMBO ROLLED IN SOMETHING. CAN YOU LOOK INTO THAT?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

THIS BURGER TASTES AWFUL!
REALLY?
YEAH, I WANT A REFUND!
CRUD, NOW I HAVE TO CHANGE OUR SIGN OUTSIDE BACK TO ONLY 999,999,999 BURGERS! SOLD!

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Unpaid TV spot
4 Snooze
7 Towering
8 Lite
10 Yule tune
11 Parka
13 Holiday desserts
16 Pigs' digs
17 Invitee
18 Sign before Virgo
19 Pleads
20 Contain
21 Aspic shapers
23 Dubai digni-taries
25 Retained
26 Swab brand
27 Chemical suffix
28 Ridicule
30 Use henna
33 Holiday desserts
36 High, wispy cloud
37 Gladden
38 Upper body
39 Sushi wrapper
40 Teeny
41 CIA opera-tive

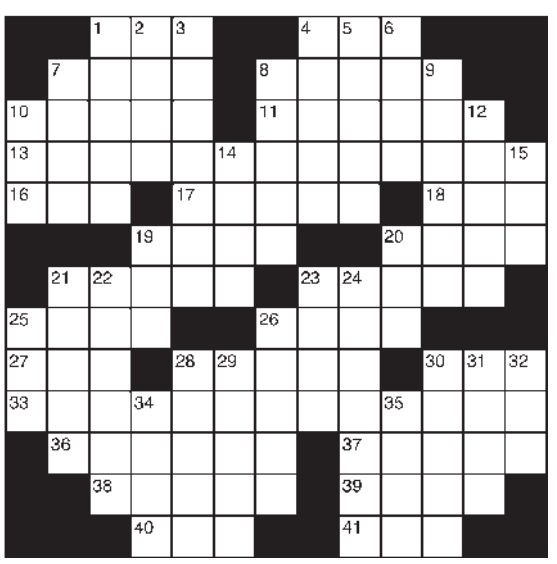
DOWN

1 Bash
2 Mailbox feature
3 Purported
4 Taboos
5 In progress
6 Picnic spot
7 Lacking slack
8 Shoe fasteners
9 Altera-tions pro
10 "NCIS" airer
12 Falls (over)
14 Carpets
15 Lay down the lawn
19 Diner order
20 Trendy
21 Army doc
22 Gift-giver's sugges-tion
23 Sicilian spouter
24 Hand warmers
25 Actress Basinger
26 Cheese, in Mexico
28 — Haute
29 Tickle
30 Journal
31 Bigfoot's kin
32 Jargon suffix
34 Cornfield intruder
35 Kerplunk!

Solution time: 21 mins.

C	R	E	W		C	U	P		Y	A	R	D
H	E	R	O		A	R	E		O	B	E	Y
A	M	I	R		P	I	C	A	Y	U	N	E
P	I	C	K	L	E	S		V	O	T	E	S
			E	A	R		H	E	M			
A	L	E	R	T		P	I	C	A	S	S	O
L	E	S			A	R	T		K	I	R	
P	I	C	A	N	T	E		S	P	I	N	E
			W	O	E		M	A	I			
S	W	E	A	T		P	I	C	N	I	C	S
P	I	C	K	E	T	E	D		T	R	I	O
A	N	T	E		M	A	A		E	M	I	L
N	E	O	N		I	R	S		R	A	I	D

Yesterday's answer 11-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alison Pill, 39; Jaleel White, 48; Fisher Stevens, 61; Kathryn Bigelow, 73.

Happy Birthday: Say goodbye to who or what causes you grief. Unity is the passage to success and completion, and knowing when to move on is wisdom you are best to acknowledge, discuss and use to your advantage when putting your long-term plan in place. Turn this year into one of prosperity, and do what brings you joy, satisfies your soul and helps you reflect on what's meaningful and important to you. Your numbers are 5, 18, 23, 30, 37, 44, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Leave nothing to chance or in someone else's jurisdiction. If you want things done your way, do them yourself. Use your intelligence, experience and ability to process circumstances as you refresh and devise a new plan, and success will follow. A personal change will lead to financial gain. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Refuse to let anger take over or allow stubbornness to hold you back. It would help if you had a diversion. It's time for you to take control and initiate what happens next. Don't expect a high return if you entrust someone to do what's best for you. Engineer your destiny, and you will reach your goal. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Refuse to let anyone tempt you into doing something that won't help you implement your agenda. Outside influences and those trying to take advantage of what you offer will play a manipulative game that can jeopardize your position, reputation and relationships. Size down, fine-tune and stick to your budget. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21- July 22):* Don't play the odds; embark on a path you can control and turn the journey into something that improves your life. A chance to work alongside someone who shares your values and respects and appreciates what you bring to the table will complement your effort. Opportunity begins with insight, and with you. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Tackle whatever comes your way with force. Use your intelligence to formulate your playbook and accelerate until you reach your maximum capacity. Don't leave anything to chance or allow anyone to outmaneuver you. Set the stage and perform your script with perfection, control and a winner's confidence. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Distance yourself from anyone living large. Curb habits, set budgets and make your ultimate goal the incentive to do whatever leads to victory. Personal and financial gain is within reach if you research and tweak your plans to fulfill your dreams, hopes and wishes. Love and romance are favored. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* An open mind and heart will allow you to gather information from the best candidates. Choose people who can offer the knowledge you lack and boost your chance to surround yourself with the best and brightest people. Communication is your most effective tool to reach your goal. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Stop before you do or say something you'll regret. Silence is golden, and listening and tossing possibilities around with the information you gather will help you coordinate a plan that offers positive change where it's desperately needed. Innovation and high energy will help you master your way to the top. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Set a budget and consider decluttering your life. Discard or sell off what's inconsequential to what you want in your life. Be honest about who you are and what you want, and you'll gain the respect and support of those who genuinely want to

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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be part of your parade. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Spend more time taking care of personal finances and addressing how you earn your keep and what you can do to raise your value. A positive change at home will give you the confidence and energy to be precise and follow through with your long-term plans. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Open your door and explore what's available. Put your energy into the details and turn whatever you do into something that's got your unique touch. Refuse to let generosity lead to debt. Refrain from putting your health at risk by visiting places that host large gatherings. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Question everyone and everything. Expect to receive tampered information or poorly written instructions. When in doubt, ask questions and reassemble your thoughts before you push forward. Handle an emotional situation concerning joint expenses with care. Love is favored, but a lack of trust will cause a dispute. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are optimistic, chatty and colorful. You are accommodating and resourceful.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

4	9						3	6
				5		4		
	6			3			8	
	1	4		9	3			
				4				7
3		7			1		9	
		6			9	1	7	
	8			6	5			2
						6		

Difficulty: ★★★ 11/27

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	8	4	7	6	9	3	2	5
6	2	5	1	4	3	8	7	9
9	7	3	8	2	5	1	4	6
5	4	9	3	8	6	2	1	7
8	1	6	2	5	7	9	3	4
7	3	2	4	9	1	5	6	8
2	5	7	9	1	4	6	8	3
3	9	1	6	7	8	4	5	2
4	6	8	5	3	2	7	9	1

Difficulty: ★★ 11/26

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

LIFE OF AN ACROBAT Solution: 7 letters

S	O	L	O	W	S	S	S	E	N	T	I	F	S	G
G	E	E	O	J	L	R	U	O	K	R	A	P	K	N
N	E	H	P	L	L	A	B	A	S	S	O	B	L	I
I	S	R	C	O	O	B	O	H	O	L	D	S	I	H
M	T	S	I	T	R	A	T	G	U	F	K	E	S	C
M	O	T	P	W	A	L	E	M	U	A	C	M	U	T
I	S	F	O	P	A	C	T	N	T	R	Ⓡ	A	T	E
W	S	I	O	E	N	H	A	I	I	Ⓐ	A	R	A	R
S	E	L	H	A	E	M	N	S	Ⓞ	E	D	F	R	T
T	S	I	L	A	B	G	E	Ⓢ	T	C	L	N	A	S
R	G	A	T	U	N	P	A	R	T	N	E	R	P	L
A	B	E	L	O	I	G	A	D	A	A	U	U	P	L
P	R	I	Y	S	T	S	I	W	T	D	O	T	A	I
S	S	T	R	I	P	L	E	N	D	R	O	P	S	K
M	E	G	A	T	S	G	N	I	G	N	I	W	S	S

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Adagio, Apparatus, Artist, Balance, Bars, Bossaball, Catches, Cradle, Dance, Drops, Fitness, Frames, Funambulism, Goal, Groups, Hanging, Health, Holds, Hoop, Lifts, Lyra, Parkour, Partner, Rise, Rolls, Rope, Show, Silks, Skating, Skills, Soar, Solo, Stage, Straps, Stretching, Stunts, Swimming, Swinging, Theater, Tosses, Triple, Twists, Wire

Yesterday's Answer: Raised

For **WONDERWORD** apps, books & more, visit Wonderword.com, or call 1-855-232-2367. Order now in time for the holidays!

Celtics extend win streak with 126-94 win over Clippers

BOSTON (AP)—Jayson Tatum scored 20 points and the Boston Celtics made 22 3-pointers in a 126-94 win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Monday night.

Payton Pritchard added with 20 points for Boston, which extended its season-high win streak to six games.

Kristaps Porzingis finished with 16 points on 6 of 12 shooting, to go along with six rebounds and two blocks in his season debut following offseason ankle surgery. He made the start and played 23 minutes with Al Horford (illness) and Luke Kornet (hamstring) out.

Ivica Zubac led the Clippers with 23 points and 10 rebounds. James Harden added 19, nine assists and eight rebounds. The loss snapped a five-game win streak for LA.

AP

LA Clippers guard James Harden, right, passes the ball behind the back of Boston Celtics center Kristaps Porzingis (8) to Ivica Zubac (40) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, Nov. 25, 2024, in Boston.

PACERS 114, PELICANS 110

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Tyrese Haliburton finished with 34 points and 13 assists and made a season best nine 3-pointers, leading Indiana past short-handed New Orleans.

Haliburton's tiebreaking 3 with 3:06 to go and Bennedict Mathurin's alley-oop dunk off Haliburton's pass with a minute left finally secured the win.

Myles Turner added 17 points, including seven straight during a fourth-quarter flurry that swung the momentum back to the Pacers.

Trey Murphy III led the Pelicans with 24 points, matching his season high. CJ McCollum added 23 points in his first action in nearly a month, and Elfrid Payton dished out a career high 21 assists - the most in an NBA game this season.

The Pelicans have lost five straight, this one with WNBA star Caitlin Clark watching inside Gainbridge Fieldhouse to the delight of some girls dressed in Clark's Indiana Fever and Iowa jerseys.

MAGIC 95, HORNETS 84

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Franz Wagner scored 13 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter, and Orlando withstood a 44-point performance by LaMelo Ball to beat short-handed Charlotte.

Moritz Wagner and Cole Anthony each had 16 points and eight rebounds off the bench, and Jonathan Isaac knocked down three fourth-quarter corner 3s to finish with 11 points for the Magic.

Ball, coming off a career-high 50-point performance against the Milwaukee Bucks on Saturday night, also had nine rebounds and seven assists. Brandon Miller added 20 points and 10 rebounds for the Hornets, who had their four-game home win streak snapped.

PISTONS 102, RAPTORS 100

DETROIT (AP)—Jaden Ivey hit a jumper as time expired to give Detroit a victory over Toronto.

The Raptors took a 98-96 lead on RJ Barrett's 3-pointer with 1:47 left, but Ivey's driving layup tied it with 1:07 to go.

After both teams missed, Isaiah Stewart got free for a go-ahead dunk, but Scottie Barnes hit a layup in traffic to make it 100-100 with 22.3 seconds to play.

The Pistons called a timeout to set up the play. Ivey ran the clock down before driving past Ochai Agbaji for an off-balance jumper from the right baseline.

MAVERICKS 129, HAWKS 119

ATLANTA (AP)—Kyrie Irving had 32 points, six assists and seven rebounds, and Dallas beat Atlanta without star Luka Doncic.

Jaden Hardy had a season-high 23 points in his first start of the season for Dallas, which has won five of six. Naji Marshall and Spencer Dinwiddie had 22 points each.

Irving had 10 points at halftime after being stifled by Hawks guard Dyson Daniels but heated up in the second half, including a stretch where he hit five consecutive field goals.

GRIZZLIES 123, TRAIL BLAZERS 98

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Ja Morant had 22 points and 11 assists in his return to the lineup after missing eight games with a hip injury, leading the Memphis to a victory over Portland.

Morant shot 6 fo 12 from the field, including 2 for 3 from 3-point range. Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 21 points, and Santi Aldama finished with 13 points and a career-high 17 rebounds.

KNICKS 145, NUGGETS 118

DENVER (AP)—OG Anunoby scored a career-high 40 points, Jalen Brunson had 17 of New York's team record-tying 45 assists and they rode a torrid start to a rout of Denver.

Brunson had 23 points to go with his career-best assist performance. The Knicks' 45 assists matched the single-game team record set against Cleveland on Nov. 24, 1979.

New York led by 12 after the first, 23 at halftime and by many as 30 points on a night the team shot a sizzling 60.9% from the floor. The starters for the Knicks played late in the game despite the large lead.

THUNDER 130, KINGS 109

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 37 points and Oklahoma City's bench players combined for 40 points in a win over Sacramento that extended their losing streak to four.

Jalen Williams scored 28 points and Isaiah Hartenstein returned from a stint on the injured list with 17 points for the Thunder.

DeMar DeRozan scored 19 points in the first half and finished the game with 30 for the Kings. The Kings bench scored half of what the Thunder's bench did, and Sacramento shot just 25% from 3-point range.

NETS 128, WARRIORS 120

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Dennis Schroder scored 31 points, Cam Thomas added 23 and undermanned Brooklyn rallied to beat Stephen Curry and Golden State.

Curry made a 3-pointer with 3:26 left and pulled the Warriors within three, but Golden State couldn't make the crucial stops and squandered an 18-point lead. Curry scored 28, and Andrew Wiggins added 18 points.

Schroder's 3 with 11:10 remaining tied the game at 92, and he put his team ahead with another at the 9:43 mark.

Jalen Wilson had 18 points for the short-handed Nets in a road back-to-back after a 108-103 win at Sacramento a night earlier.

Cavaliers' unexpected 17-1 start to season also produces unexpected star: reserve guard Ty Jerome

CLEVELAND (AP)—As the Cavaliers were pushing their home record to 10-0 and improving the franchise's historic start to an eye-popping 17-1, a solitary voice rose from the seats that could be heard throughout the lower bowl of Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse.

"M-V-P! M-V-P!" the lone fan chanted.

Down on the floor, Donovan Mitchell noticed. However, it wasn't directed at the five-time All-Star, but a teammate shooting free throws.

Later, Ty Jerome wanted proof it happened.

"Did you get it on video?" the reserve guard asked.

Cleveland's unexpected start has produced an unexpected rising star.

After missing all but two games last season with a severe ankle injury that dragged on and required surgery, Jerome has not only become an invaluable piece for first-year Cavs coach Kenny Atkinson but is emblematic of the team's early-season success.

This wasn't expected—not by the Cavs and certainly not by Jerome.

"He's in this zone," Atkinson said of the 27-year-old Jerome, already with his fourth NBA team. "It's phenomenal."

While he's been good from the jump this season, Jerome has taken his game to another level this past week.

One night after the Cavs lost in Boston after 15 straight wins, Jerome made seven 3-pointers—two on Steph Curry-like heat checks just inside the halfcourt logo—in the first half and finished with a career-high 29 points in a win over New Orleans.

For an encore on Sunday, he matched Mitchell, his longtime friend and boyhood teammate in New York, with 26 points and six assists as the Cavs downed Toronto.

That performance prompted the MVP chant from the fan who once reserved the somewhat sarcastic salute for popular Cavs sub Cedi Osman.

Jerome has a been a marvel since the beginning of training camp, when he made a first impression on Atkinson that has only grown stronger.

"Since the moment he stepped in our gym," Atkinson said when asked how long he knew Jerome would be a major contributor this season. "He's been phenomenal every day. I mean, (general manager) Koby (Altman) jokes about MVP of August, September, October. We're all expecting, not expecting, but when is it going to start dipping?

"OK, it's open gym. OK, it's training camp. OK, first five games. He just keeps going and it's a real, real credit to him. He's just in a state of grace right now. It's beautiful to watch."

The same could be said for the Cavs, whose burst from the gate under Atkinson is one of the league's best stories. The 57-year-old Atkinson, an affable, fast-talking hoops junkie from Long Island, has made Cleveland an offensive powerhouse.

The Cavs lead the league in virtually every statistical category—points, field-goal percentage, 3-point percentage, point differential and offensive rating. It's a system based on pace, ball movement and fundamentals and it's hard to defend.

"A chaotic environment with standard principles," Atkinson said.

Atkinson is getting the best from Cleveland's core four of players—Mitchell, Darius Garland, Evan Mobley and Jarrett Allen—while also developing his bench, something predecessor J.B. Bickerstaff struggled to do.

Jerome, who played on Virginia's national championship team in 2019, gives Atkinson a multi-skilled player capable on both ends of the floor. He's come off the bench to provide points or a key assist, and Atkinson deploys him defensively to pester point guards.

"It's hard to take him out of the game," Atkinson said. "He's in every conversation at all times. 'Do we need Ty in there?' He's playing phenomenally."

Mitchell isn't surprised. He's goes way back with Jerome, playing with him on a Riverside (N.Y.) Hawks youth team coached by Jerome's dad.

"His dad used to cuss us out at 8 years old," Mitchell said with a smile. "I tell people all the time that I don't like positive reinforcement. I think it's just PTSD from my AAU days with his pops. Getting chewed out at 9 a.m. definitely is something that you don't forget."

Mitchell also finds it funny that Jerome's comeback is getting such attention.

"Y'all be saying that like he died and came back to life," Mitchell said. "For him to come back, not only be a solid player, but be dominant, be a special player for us, it kind of gives us life. He's just done so much for us on a nightly basis, and I have no doubt he'll continue to keep this up."

The Cavs figure to come back to the pack at some point.

But a season that began with them considered a contender has turned into become something more.

"17-1," Atkinson said Sunday, reminded of his team's record. "It's like, wow. I've been in his league 17 years and it just doesn't happen. You should have six, seven losses. You could be .500 at this point. Even in a game like tonight, you lose these games.

"We're not exactly on top of our game and we still come up with a 'W.' It's pretty shocking where we are, and that's not to disparage anybody. It's more about how hard this league is to do that."

Jackson accounts for 3 TDs as Ravens beat Chargers, 30-23

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)— Lamar Jackson and Derrick Henry made sure Ravens coach John Harbaugh could maintain bragging rights over his younger brother.

Jackson threw two touchdown passes and ran for a score, and Henry rushed for 140 yards as Baltimore beat Jim Harbaugh's Los Angeles Chargers 30-23 on Monday night.

John Harbaugh improved to 3-0 in the Harbaugh Bowl.

"It means a lot. With me being a big brother, I can't lose to my little brother. That's what I believe going into the game he was thinking about that a lot. We came out victorious today," Jackson said.

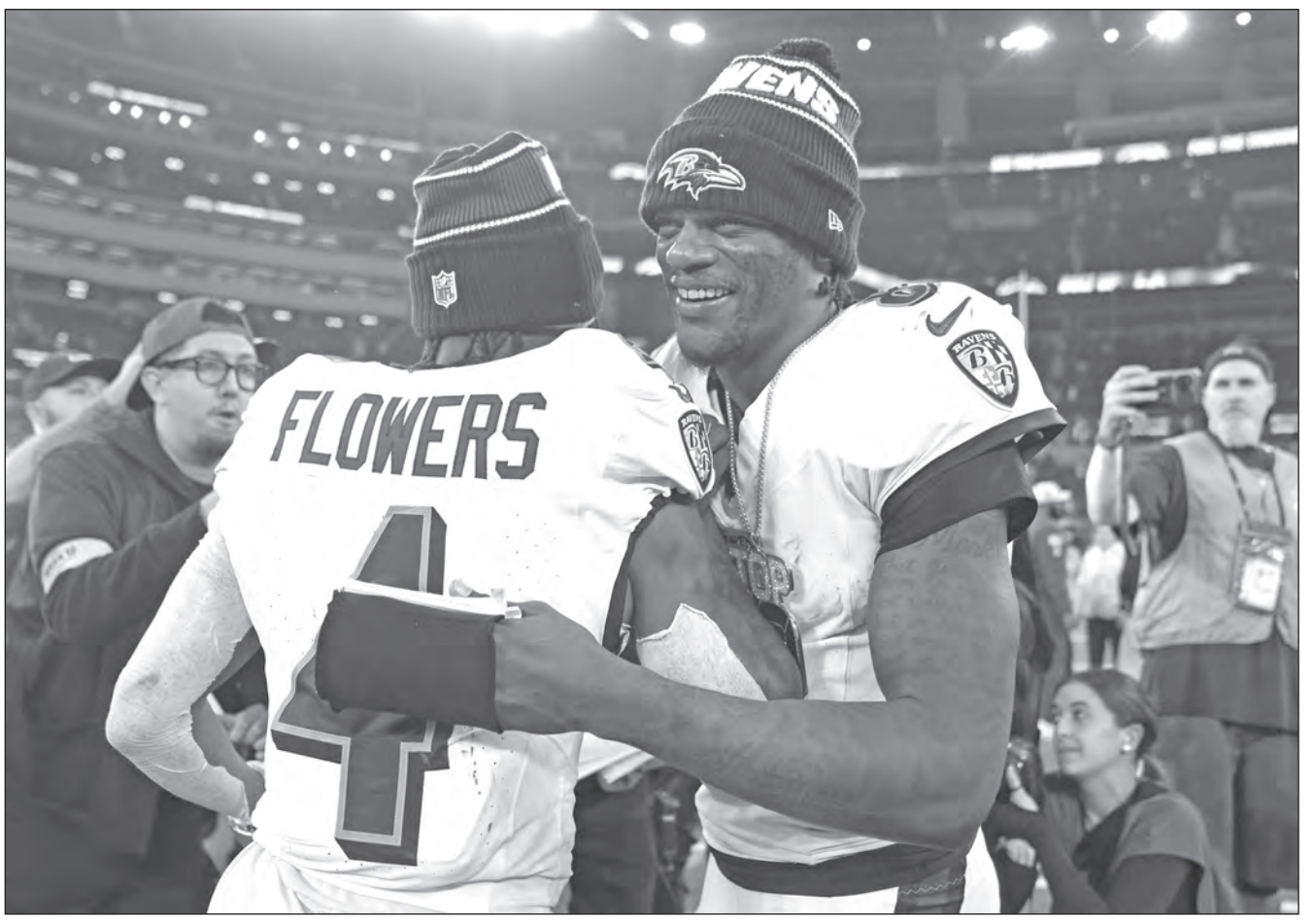
It was the first matchup between the Harbaughs since Super Bowl 47 in February 2013, when John's Ravens beat Jim's San Francisco 49ers. Jim Harbaugh returned to the NFL this year after nine seasons at Michigan, where he won a national title.

The brothers shared a quick hug and handshake at midfield after the game.

"I just told him, 'You're a great coach and you have a great team. And I love you.' And he said, 'I love you and congratulations.' It was good," John Harbaugh said.

Justice Hill ran for a 51-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter to put it out reach for the Ravens (8-4), who have won three of four.

Justin Herbert completed 21 of 36 for 218 yards ran for a 5-yard touchdown on a scramble up the middle on the Chargers' opening drive.



AP

Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson, right, hugs wide receiver Zay Flowers after a win over the Los Angeles Chargers in an NFL football game Monday, Nov. 25, 2024, in Inglewood, Calif.

The Chargers went 54 minutes between touchdowns. Gus Edwards went 1 yard off left guard to get them within 30-23 with 45 seconds remaining. Baltimore's Isaiah Likely recovered the ensuing onside kick.

Cameron Dicker had three field goals as the Chargers (7-4) had their four-game winning streak snapped.

"I thought we did a good job of limiting turnovers and keeping the ball. We've just got to score more points," Herbert said.

The Chargers had to rely more on Herbert and the passing game after running back J.K. Dobbins suffered a knee injury in the second quarter. Meanwhile, the Ravens finished with 212 yards rushing and outgained the Chargers 389 yards to 285. Henry didn't score a touchdown for the first time this season but had a productive night with 24 carries.

"They ran the ball real well. We need better block destruction just across the board, but you've got to give them credit. They did a heck of a job," Jim Harbaugh said.

The Ravens trailed 10-0 but scored on five straight drives to take control. They also converted three fourth downs, including a 2-yard gain by Mark Andrews on a direct snap late in the second quarter on fourth-and-1 at their own 16 on what ended up being the go-ahead drive.

"This is a big win for our guys. I'm proud of the way they came out and responded. We were down 10-0 and our guys stepped up," John Harbaugh said. "They really didn't flinch and kept fighting. They locked in on the details and played good, winning football."

Jackson, who leads the league in total yards, completed 16 of 22 passes for 177 yards. He also had 17 rushing yards, including a 10-yard keeper off right end early in the second quarter to get the Ravens within 10-7.

Henry was held to 13 yards on three carries on the Ravens' first two drives, but got back in gear on the team's third possession with three carries for 44 yards.

"It definitely added a spark, you know, got us some momentum on our side and be able to get in there and get in the end zone," Henry said. "It just happened that we were able to get a drive together and finish a drive with points and get us going."

Five plays after Andrews' fourth-down conversion, Jackson threw a deep ball to Rashod Bateman, who made a contested catch in the end zone for a 40-yard touchdown, giving the Ravens a 14-10 advantage.

"Just giving him an opportunity. I believe my receivers have great hands and he made a terrific catch," Jackson said.

Baltimore extended its lead to 23-16 when Andrews caught a 6-yard pass in the back of the end zone. The Ravens' 2-point conversion attempt was no good.

Hill put Baltimore up by two scores midway through the fourth quarter with his run off right end on third-and-3. It was the third TD run of at least 51 yards at SoFi Stadium in a 24-hour period after Philadelphia's Saquon Barkley had scoring runs of 72 and 70 yards en route to a 255-yard rushing night against the Rams Sunday night.

"I feel like some of my passes early were off and I was ticked off. But we have a great running back, offensive line and helped them get in the groove and we kept our foot on the gas," Jackson said.

Monday night Jackson

Jackson improved to 7-2 in Monday night games, including 6-1 on the road.

He has a 124.3 passer rating on Monday nights, the best in NFL history, with 22 touchdown passes and no interceptions.

LA Rams' blowout loss to Eagles shows they're far from title contention, but not the playoff race

LOS ANGELES (AP)— Until Saquon Barkley and the Philadelphia Eagles came to town, the Los Angeles Rams had started to build some confidence with four wins in their past five games.

That month of progress, particularly by the Rams' young defense, was summarily shredded when Barkley went off for 255 yards and two long touchdown runs in the Eagles' 37-20 blowout victory Sunday night.

The Rams (5-6) gave up the biggest performance by an opposing running back in the history of a franchise that began play in 1936, and the defeat exposed just how far they are from true title contention.

Coach Sean McVay had little to say that wasn't obvious on the field after his defense allowed 481 yards to the 9-2 Eagles — a team that has managed to maintain the veteran leadership and overall depth that the Rams possessed three years ago during their championship run, but which they haven't been able to rebuild since.

"There's humbling nights like this in football," McVay said. "It's all about how you respond. I do know that this team has the capability to be able to respond, and we'll get ourselves up off the mat and we'll have a good week of preparation this week."

The Rams would do well to remember that playoff contention is still quite possible in the mediocre NFC West, where Los Angeles is still just one game out of first place.

Everything else that McVay wants for his team is still a long way from happening, no matter what a few solid wins seemed to indicate over the previous six weeks.

Not much went well against the Eagles, who had an answer for almost everything the Rams tried on both sides of the ball. Los Angeles' offense had a handful of solid drives, but the Rams' defense allowed points in every quarter.

"You've got to look at the tape of this one (and) figure out where to go from there, as far as what you did wrong," Matthew Stafford said after passing for two TDs. "How can you correct those things? Not going to let these guys beat us twice. This is the NFL. You play the game long enough, you're going to have unfortunate nights. You're going to have nights where you don't play as good as you possibly can. You don't ever want them to get out of hand like they did, but you've got to move on."

What's working

Puka Nacua and Stafford are the engine under the Rams' offense, not the rushing game. The second-year wideout had nine catches for 117 yards in the 11th 100-yard performance (including playoffs) of his 23-game NFL career, while Stafford passed for 243 yards and held up well under five sacks and 11 quarterback hits allowed in a poor offensive line performance.

What needs help

The Rams began the weekend 18th in the NFL against the run. Barkley's performance dropped them to 28th at 144.3 yards per game. Their problems are both in personnel and scheme: A missed gap assignment led to Barkley's second TD run, but the Rams also lack the run-swallowing inside linebacker who sometimes makes up for those mistakes, as Bobby Wagner and Ernest Jones did in recent years.

Stock up

Demarcus Robinson is having another quietly productive season as Stafford's third option at receiver. His scoring catch against Philly gave him five TD receptions in the past five games. He also might be a good luck charm for the Rams: Robinson has never missed the playoffs in his nine NFL seasons.

Stock down

Kyren Williams had a rough outing while his Eagles counterpart starred. The third-year Rams running back fumbled twice, losing one, and finished with 72 yards on 16 carries. He also allowed a sack when he didn't pick up linebacker Nakobe Dean in pass protection. Williams has fumbled four times in the past four games, and a frustrating season behind LA's mediocre offensive line might be compelling him to try to do too much.

Injuries

The Rams desperately need right tackle Rob Havenstein back from his ankle injury after backup Warren McClendon got repeatedly exposed by Philadelphia. McVay has been cagey as usual about the severity of Havenstein's injury, which has sidelined him for three games.

Key number

3 — The number of consecutive games in which rookie kicker Joshua Karty has missed a field goal.

Next steps

With a visit from powerhouse Buffalo followed by a short-week Thursday night in Santa Clara looming in early December, the Rams probably need to beat the New Orleans Saints (4-7) this weekend to stay in contention for a winning record. Trouble is, the once-struggling Saints have won two straight—and running back Alvin Kamara must be licking his chops.

Red Sox lefty Cam Booser wins Tony C. Award for overcoming adversity

BOSTON (AP)—Red Sox left-hander Cam Booser, who overcame alcohol abuse, injuries and a bicycling accident before returning this season from a career in construction to make his major-league debut at almost 32 years old, will receive the Tony Conigliaro Award for overcoming adversity.

"To have my name in the same conversation as Tony Conigliaro is something that I will always hold close," Booser said. "This is truly humbling."

The award named for the former Boston outfielder honors a player who overcame adversity "through the attributes of spirit, determination, and courage that were trademarks of Tony C." Others receiving votes were Kansas City right-hander Lucas Erceg, Atlanta lefty Chris Sale, Oakland righty Mason Miller, Baltimore righty Albert Suárez and Cleveland lefty Matthew Boyd.

Previous winners include Jim Eisenreich, Bo Jackson and Curtis Pride. Previous Red Sox players to win the award were Bret Saberhagen, Jon Lester and John Lackey.

The award was voted on by a committee of Red Sox and Major League Baseball officials, media members and a representative of the Conigliaro family.

Booser retired from baseball in 2017 at 25 after battling through alcohol abuse and injuries that included a broken leg and broken vertebrae, Tommy John surgery, a torn labrum and a broken back when he was hit by a car while riding a bicycle. He joined a carpenters union and worked construction but resumed throwing off a mound in late 2020.

Booser pitched in independent leagues in 2021, spent time in the Diamondbacks organization in 2022 and signed a minor league deal with the Red Sox last year, making 48 relief appearances for Triple-A Worcester in 2023. The Red Sox called him up on April 19 and he recorded the last three outs of a victory in his major league debut in Pittsburgh that night.

In all, he had a 3.38 ERA with 43 strikeouts in 42 2/3 innings in 43 games last season, going 15 games without allowing a run.

Conigliaro was a Boston area native who made his major league debut in 1964 at 19 and homered in his first at-bat at Fenway Park. In his second season, he became the youngest player to lead his league in homers, with 32; he reached 100 homers at 22, the youngest in AL history.

AP

Boston Red Sox relief pitcher Cam Booser throws to a Kansas City Royals batter during the ninth inning of a baseball game against the Kansas City Royals, Monday, Aug. 5, 2024, in Kansas City, Mo.

SMJ

From page 16

points at the first half, 28-41. Despite three buckets from downtown, SMJ doubled it with six and back-to-back free throw conversions by Charlz Sanchez allowed them to pull away.

SMJ stayed the course from there as they rained more buckets from beyond the arc in the second half. Sharpshooter Sean Licayan, who ended the first half with a 3, revved up his reign of terror from downtown once again and opened up the second with another three. He went on to put up six from deep territory and topped it off with a field goal.

Alsa Baso's Tony Kim, Dennis Calunsang, and Jepoy Tabora struggled to keep pace and found themselves deeper underwater as the game progressed. Toward the end, SMJ already had the game in the bag as Marl Balignasay wrapped it up with a three for an 83-56 final.

Licayan led SMJ with a game-high 20 points, while Robles put up 16, and Khristian David and Frank Ferrer scored 10 apiece.

Kim scored 18 points, while Calunsang put up 13, and Tabora had 9 markers.

For SMJ and masters championship team 670 Gravity's coach Erwin Lumanlan, he said, "Honestly, it felt unbelievable to have both of my team in the finals, but I never lost hope in them."

As for team captain of both teams—Jun Estolas—he said of the semi open win, "We were lucky we had a good lead early in the game and my team did a good job to control and maintain it until the final buzzer. I'm so proud of the young boys for playing like they're veterans already, and for the veterans, they played like they're only 21-years-old."

He added, "Our coach did a good job rotating our players and everytime Alsa Baso cut our lead, he still did not panic. I'm very happy that we won both championships." As he played in the masters finals just minutes before, he didn't play that long in the semi open finals, but managed to sink in a 3. He also said it was a dream of his to play with his nephew, Eros.

"Congratulations to Alsa Baso also. Big thanks to our sponsors 670 Gravity and SMJ. Also, big thanks to my wife and kiddos for the support, to Win Pacific Corp., to boss Darwin, table officials, referees, and fans—thank you."

With their masters division win, he said, "It was very tough for us to win, especially our opponents were taller, but teamwork in the last minutes and our defense worked out—as well as the saying 'never say die.' I also think that we won from good decisions from our coach to change our defense strategy."

Results of the individual awards will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

SMJ Corp 83 – Licayan 20, Robles 16, David 10, Ferrer 10, Suba 7, Mejarito 6, Sanchez 6, Estolas 3, Balignasay 3, Yanto 2,

Alsa Baso 56 – Kim 18, Calunsag 13, Jepoy Tabora 9, Sanchez 6, A. Tabora 4, Kintz 4, Javier 2.

Scoring by halves: 41-28, 83-56.

NMIFA

Shirley's FC 1's rookie keeper Sylvina Simram poses with her Fair Play Award for her sportsmanship on and off the field during the awards ceremony of the 2024 Fall Dove Women's League B at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Sunday.

UMANGS

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Mallards 2 bested Saipan International School Geckos 1, 28-4; KobES 2 stumped GES 1, 24-6; GES 2 won their second game, 34-4, over Grace Christian Academy Eagles; SIS 1 came back to win their second game, 12-4 over San Vicente Elementary School Canaries 1, 12-4; SIS 2 won over SVES 2, 17-4; WSR 1 defeated Brilliant Star School, 26-3; Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School rammed Mount Carmel School Knights, 14-3; Oleai Elementary School Turtles took down WSR 1, 26-15; and Kagman Elementary School won over GES 1.

KobES 1 35 – Mansfield 8, Alvarado 6, Okururu 4, Ray 4, Cosmes 4, Degang 2, Mullens 2, Deleon Guerrero 2, Ngeskebei 1.

WSR 2 – Pangelinan 4, Palacios 2, Benavente 2, Rayphand 2, Martino 2, #17 2.

Scoring by quarters: 10-4, 16-6, 25-8, 35-14.

SHIRLEY'S

From page 16

that I would play it. Playing another sport would be difficult for me because I've played basketball for the longest time, but I'm always open to trying new things, and soccer just so happens to be one of them. So far, this season has been the best. My team is incredible, and I adore their enthusiasm. I now look forward to playing on the field every Sunday, no matter how exhausted I am, because of their encouragement and compliments. I can't wait for next season!"

Third place went to MP United Pink after they won over Kanoa FC, 4-1.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES
NBA STANDINGS
EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlantic Division				
Boston	15	3	.833	–
New York	10	7	.588	4½
Brooklyn	8	10	.444	7
Toronto	4	14	.222	11
Philadelphia	3	13	.188	11
Southeast Division				
Orlando	12	7	.632	–
Miami	7	7	.500	2½
Atlanta	7	11	.389	4½
Charlotte	6	11	.353	5
Washington	2	13	.133	8
Central Division				
Cleveland	17	1	.944	–
Milwaukee	8	9	.471	8½
Indiana	8	10	.444	9
Detroit	8	11	.421	9½
Chicago	7	11	.389	10
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
Houston	12	6	.667	–
Memphis	11	7	.611	1
Dallas	10	8	.556	2
San Antonio	9	8	.529	2½
New Orleans	4	14	.222	8
Northwest Division				
Oklahoma City	13	4	.765	–
Denver	9	7	.563	3½
Minnesota	8	8	.500	4½
Portland	7	11	.389	6½
Utah	4	12	.250	8½
Pacific Division				
Golden State	12	5	.706	–
L.A. Lakers	10	6	.625	1½
L.A. Clippers	11	8	.579	2
Phoenix	9	7	.563	2½
Sacramento	8	10	.444	4½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES
NFL STANDINGS
AMERICAN CONFERENCE

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
East						
Buffalo	9	2	0	.818	320	214
Miami	5	6	0	.455	215	236
N.Y. Jets	3	8	0	.273	204	242
New England	3	9	0	.250	197	282
South						
Houston	7	5	0	.583	285	268
Indianapolis	5	7	0	.417	242	274
Tennessee	3	8	0	.273	202	290
Jacksonville	2	9	0	.182	208	316
North						
Pittsburgh	8	3	0	.727	252	186
Baltimore	8	4	0	.667	364	294
Cincinnati	4	7	0	.364	297	296
Cleveland	3	8	0	.273	186	267
West						
Kansas City	10	1	0	.909	270	218
L.A. Chargers	7	4	0	.636	243	175
Denver	7	5	0	.583	264	202
Las Vegas	2	9	0	.182	206	314
NATIONAL CONFERENCE						
East						
Philadelphia	9	2	0	.818	296	199
Washington	7	5	0	.583	334	277
Dallas	4	7	0	.364	221	319
N.Y. Giants	2	9	0	.182	163	252
South						
Atlanta	6	5	0	.545	244	274
Tampa Bay	5	6	0	.455	309	273
New Orleans	4	7	0	.364	262	260
Carolina	3	8	0	.273	194	340
North						
Detroit	10	1	0	.909	360	183
Minnesota	9	2	0	.818	274	197
Green Bay	8	3	0	.727	288	223
Chicago	4	7	0	.364	221	217
West						
Arizona	6	5	0	.545	244	236
Seattle	6	5	0	.545	246	244
L.A. Rams	5	6	0	.455	233	276
San Francisco	5	6	0	.455	260	260

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Celtics extend win streak with 126-94 win over Clippers

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Red Sox lefty Cam Booser wins Tony C. Award for overcoming adversity

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SMJ reel in semi open title over Alsa Baso

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

SMJ Corp. reeled in the biggest catch of them all—the semi open championship—after they tied up Alsa Baso, 83-56, in the Win Pacific Corp. Invitational Basketball League 2024 at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium last Sunday.

SMJ Corp., along with some veteran players from the masters championship team 670 Gravity, navigated the court with ease. They came out hunting, attacking the rim with the ferocity of a predator in deep waters.

This left Also Baso reeling and struggling to stay afloat as they were down by 13

See SMJ on Page 15

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Semis open champions SMJ Corp. pose for a group photo during the awards ceremony of the Win Pacific Corp. Invitational Basketball League 2024 at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium last Sunday.

Undefeated Umangs 1 cruise to 4th straight win

LEIGH GASES

Koblerville Elementary School 1's Lovan Ngeskebei shoots a free throw during their game against William S. Reyes Elementary School 2 in the 2024-2025 IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Koblerville Elementary School Umangs 1 are still undefeated with four straight wins in the 2024-2025 IT&E Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary School Basketball League.

They crushed William S. Reyes Kingfishers 2, 35-14, last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Umangs pinched out a 10-6 first quarter after Dolores Okururu and Baylyn Mansfield put up twin 4 points, while James Defang netted two markers. KobES clearly had better footwork and ball handling skills which they continued to show off in the ensuing quarters.

The Kingfishers struggled to wriggle out of the Umangs defensive grasp and managed to score just 4 points total in the second and third quarter. Meanwhile, the Umangs continued to apply pressure on both ends and, led by Rebecca Alvarado and Mansfield, they were up, 25-8 heading into the fourth quarter.

The Kingfishers tried to soar above the crashing waves the Umangs created in the fourth quarter as they scored six points, but the Umangs went on to add to their total and win it by 21 points.

In the end, Mansfield had a game-high 8 points, while Alvarado scored 6, and Okururu and Andre Ray collected 4 each.

In other results that day, Garapan Elementary School

See UMANGS on Page 15

Shirley's FC 2 serves up Dove B finals victory over SFC 1

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Shirley's Football Club 2 served up a finals victory over sister team Shirley's FC 1, in the 2024 Fall Dove Women's League at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Sunday.

Their supporters were treated to a sizzling contest, as both teams brought their best recipes for success to the pitch. The match had all the makings of a masterclass in high-pressure cooking, with Shirley's Football Club 2 plating a down-to-the-wire 2-1 final in their championship showdown.

Shirley's teams turned up the heat early as SFC 1's Catalina Dela Cruz whipped up a goal just six minutes in. They managed to contain that lead for 10 minutes until SFC 2's Mikky Buno scored the equalizer for a nail-biting 1-1 game.

The battle of pitch mastery went on as both teams struggled for possession—both sides slicing through each other's defenses to no avail.

Then, unfortunately, SFC 1's Sylvina Simram let a goal slip past their net to put SFC 2 up by one, 2-1 in the 23rd minute. The game simmered on as both teams tweaked their final game-day recipes.

With the game boiling down to the final minutes, they turned up the burner, but SFC 1 failed to recover and SFC 2 held on to win.

SFC 2 included Marilou Arriola, Jaclyn Quitugua, Kristanna Lim, Mikky Buno, Maxine Lopez, Kimberly Camacho, Kathyryn Sablan, Bridgette Oh, Kylie Whipps, Shirley Ann Deleon Guerrero, Christine Aninzo, Loveleen Davis, and Joanna Castro.

SFC 1's rookie goalie, Sylvina Simram was awarded the Fair Play award for her sportsmanship on and off the pitch.

She said of her award, "At first, I was a little taken aback because I didn't anticipate that a player in their first season, much less a rookie, would win this honor. I was thrilled!"

As for the season, the NMI Women's National Basketball Team player said, "I actually like the sport! Since soccer is my least favorite activity, I never would have imagined

See SHIRLEY'S on Page 15

NMIFA

Champions Shirley's FC 2 pose with their trophy during the awards ceremony of the 2024 Fall Dove Women's League B at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Sunday.

NMIFA

Runner-up Shirley's FC 1 poses with their trophy during the awards ceremony of the 2024 Fall Dove Women's League B at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Sunday.